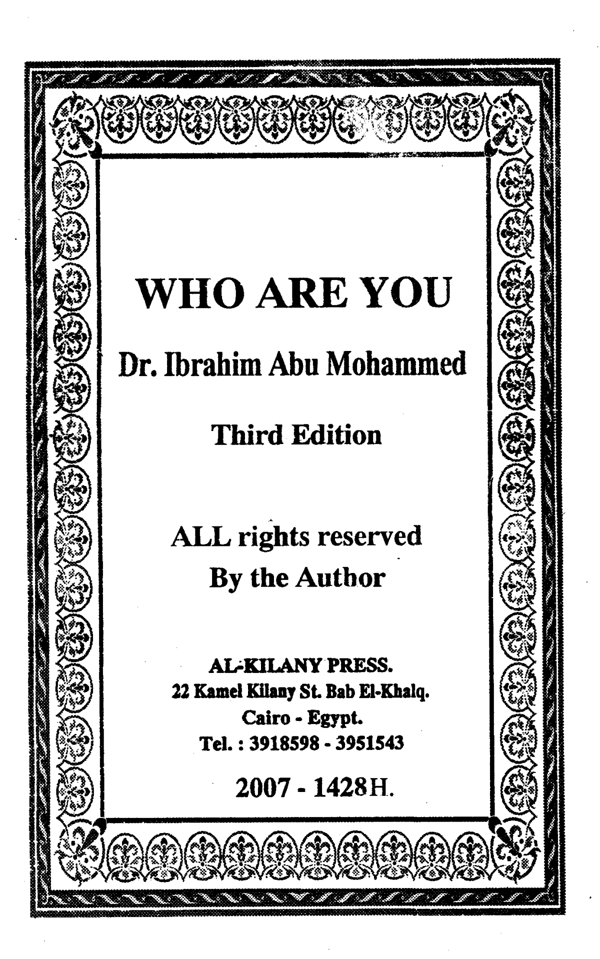


WHO ARE YOU

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Contents

Dedication

To those who do not know who they are, where they have come from, or where their destiny lies. To all those who are indifferent about tomorrow or concerned about securing their future, and to the ambitious ones who seek to stay in a world that will cease to exist.

To all those whose minds have been tampered with by the illusions of fantasy until they have became convinced that they have liberated themselves, when in fact they have fallen victim to a world which they have become slaves to.

To those who have been perplexed by life, and whose souls yearn with desire to understand the point of beginning and end. Thus, as a consequence, they lose their way and wander down divided roads.

To all of them, I present this book!

Through this book, I aspire to guide the perplexed, awaken the mindless, lead the misguided, soothe the heart which has been restless by anxiety, and reassure the conscious which has been overcome by fear. So much so to the point of almost killing it and silencing within it the volition of the soul when it strives earnestly in its search for the truth and in its aspiration towards eternity.

To all of them. I present this book.

The Author
Dr. Ibrahim Abu Mohammad

Preface

Contemporary Man lives with two crises.

One of them is internal, well within himself, while the other is an external one found in his surrounding environment. Within himself, he does not know or make known who he is, where he has come from, why he has come or where is he going.

This is a major crisis, which transforms the fruitful outcomes of knowledge to tools of annihilation and ruin, which cause the destruction of life.

The second crises is in the environment around him, where multiplicity, double standards, contradiction in words and deeds, shapes and forms, the conspicuous and the intrinsic exist.

Upon the faces a wide smile is drawn, while within the hearts and minds enmity is concealed, grudge is kept on the boil and evil as a whole is lying deep below, only to resurface in a form of devastation and ravage at an appropriate place and time.

Amidst the pressure of both crises, Man lives with fear, insomnia, frustration and alienation, even though he may be living among his family and kinfolk. Hence, the most alienated of strangers is he who feels a stranger in his own homeland.

In confronting these two crises, and under their cruelty and severity, Man is one of two types; he would either seek refuge in a sound and healthy retreat, taking shelter in a safe and fortified sanctum. Or he will avoid confrontation by withdrawing into the oblivion of desires and heinousness, sinking into debauchery in an attempt to become oblivious

to reality in order to escape its force and brutality. Thus, Man ends up living in an alienated and strange world.

He looks around him only to see that the elements of nature –alongside the components of existence and those of the universe– pursue their course and role in harmony, co-ordination and complaisance. He recognizes that the laws which guide their paths run with precision and veracity, while he is the only anomaly in this entire universe. He is weak yet strong, an illiterate and yet a philosopher, combining all odds at the same time. He is an oppressor and yet submissive, free yet enslaved, a giant and a dwarf – such is the inconsistent nature of man, who fills the world with repression and corruption. All the while a tiny fly is capable of extinguishing the flame of this man's life by inflicting him with a minor virus. This man is the only being who strays and tyrannizes, displays arrogance and oppression, commits injustice against others and destroys the environment. He ruins life at a time when all of nature's elements that exists around him stand within their own boundaries, and all the components of existence adhere to their role and cycle of existence from beginning to end.

It is Man alone who transforms his world into a jungle of injustice, where he commits suppression without justification, violence without a reason, and monopolization and domination by force beyond any limits or restrictions.

What has befallen Man to cause him to become a constantly disquieted, tense being who is forever violent?!

What has he missed that caused him to lose the peace and tranquility from his life, the serenity from within himself and the safety and security of his present and future?

Why is he living in such disarray, with such a degree of promiscuity, irresponsibility and immorality?

Why does frustration and dismay crawl into his life and show on his face despite an abundance of wealth?

Amid such a surge of oppression and contradiction, Man and life remain as two odd mysteries. Where all ideologies and philosophies failed in solving their perplexities and failed in offering the ardent desire of the mind – an answer to the baffling questions that revolve around Man and life... Who am I? Who are You? Where did you come from? Why did You come? What will your destiny be?

In this book my dear reader, which is between your hands, I endeavored to clarify the facts and illustrate the points clearly before you. I also took part in unveiling that intellectual and emotional nightmare which dissipated man's energy and exhausted his time. That which thwarted his chances of inventions and diligent work when he set out in search of finding the key to life among a pile of philosophical errors and deficient man-made ideologies. And by a dint of strenuous efforts, these defects and flaws lead him to a standstill at the edge of these phenomenon, failing to probe the depth of falsehood or open before him the door of eternity when the mind sets out on a quest amid the rubbles of ruins in this evanescent World.

Amidst such jet-black darkness, the cry of prophethood comes to light from a distance, overflowing and filled with the infallible revelation only to illuminate the entire World. To eliminate darkness, break away the fetters of life and liberate it from this anarchy and confusion, and to give answers to all the perplexing questions. To offer us,

together with the break of dawn, the key to eternity and the mystery of existence. In order that, the mind will be put to rest following a long path of hardship. A new path where serenity and calmness will overcome the soul after a long period of restlessness, anxiety and suffering.

"It is He Who sends down manifest proofs to His servant (Muhammad) that He may bring you out from darkness into light. Verily, Allah is to you full of kindness, Most Merciful " {Al-Hadid 57:9}

"Therefore, believe in Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad) and in the light (this Qur'an) which We have sent down. And Allah is All-Aware of what you do" { At-Taghabun 64: 8}

Who am I ??

Who am I...?
Where did I come from...?
Where am I going...?

These are questions that have been asked at all intellectual levels, and nearly by all cultures, with variation in the methodology of presentation. At times, they were raised with frankness and clarity. And at other times, they were presented with timidness and aloofness.

Occasionally, they were asked by Man, discretely within himself. And from time to time, they were presented between Man and others, perhaps as a challenge in an attempt to solve life's riddle...

Conventional human philosophy endeavored to give solutions to these questions and exerted every conceivable effort in unraveling the enigma. However, all past and contemporary efforts fell short in accomplishing this task.

How did it, after all, undertake to answer these questions? And what did it say in its definition of Man?

Philosophy's Perplexity in Defining Man

The ancient Greek philosophy believes in Man's unlimited power over knowledge; Man's knowledge about himself and about the universe surrounding him. This is achieved through pure intellect, such as in the case of the Ancient Greeks, or through what is known as applied intellect (trial, speculation) as stated by Gastone Blashar[1]

However, this hypothesis – despite its belief in Man's limitless ability over knowledge – failed to render Man with a definition about himself, or to even avail him of the ability to define himself through that hypothesis. Hence, it did not even draw any closer to that enigma, let alone finding an appropriate solution for it.

And so the questions remain unanswered:

Who am I?
Where did I come from?
Where am I going?

These concepts did not represent the only attempt to draw closer to such a complicated enigma. Instead, there were others who were striving to at least offer an answer to the first question... Who am I?

1- A French Philosopher and Physics Scientist (1884-1962). He had a number of books published, such as: "Psycho-analysis of Fire", "Dreams and Water", "Wind and Dreams", "The Earth and the Dreams of volition", "The Earth and the Dreams of Silence". Blashar believed that knowledge in general can educate the mind and that the mind should surrender to knowledge, to knowledge that is more developed. This was possible by moving from reality-based education to relative-based education.

Thus, many answers were presented, and in essence, their contents and tenor revolved around the belief that Man's inner nature is the scale with which everything else is measured, and that no one has sovereignty over Man in guiding his thinking and behavior. Rather, he is alone the source of values, good and evil, virtue and vice, and that he is the sole creator for these values to the extent that even religion is a personal sentiment, which is peculiar to him and to him alone. Yet, this attempt did not penetrate deep into the crux of that intricate question: Who am I?

Existentialism (or Dialectical Materialism) struggled to directly get closer to the question, hence defining Man as a being that existed by himself and that none had created him.

And if contemporary schools of philosophy varied in defining the true identity of Man, prominent Thinkers also differed as to Man's composition...

Is he a mere brain;
a complex biological composition;
a social and historical being;
a production machine;
a force of anxiety and creativity; or is he simply an evolved beast?

All these theories were presented about Man, while schools of thought and philosophies were vastly divided as to the most accurate and sound theory that defines Man's reality[2]

Nevertheless, all of them agree that Man's sovereignty is supreme whether as an individual or as a society. And

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2- Reality is nature or essence or entity.

even if God existed, He has no right to intervene in Man's life, as they have claimed.

Man therefore, according to Sartre[3], is left to himself, for he is the only being which exists for himself, and by himself. He alone created and shaped himself. In the beginning he was nothing, and he does not exist until a later time, i.e. when he works, and that through his work he in fact makes himself and determines it, thus according to Sartre, he is intimately responsible for his own actions.

Thus, according to Sartre, it is as if to say that his existence in the beginning was nothing, and that this existence is not realized except after he works.

Karl Marx[4] also shared with Sartre the view that Man's essence was linked to work, and that Man without work is a non-entity.

Do you see, my dear reader, whether in fact this attempt – which had linked Man's essence to work – had actually

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3- John Paul Sartre is a French Philosopher (1906-1985). Founded the Existentialism School of Thought. It is a philosophy that considers Man's freedom as the crux of his anxious sentimental existence. He is therefore free as he creates himself by himself at every instant and there was no human nature that was decreed since sempiternity, while there is no firm definition of man and how he is ought to be. He has many books, some of these writings are "Existence and Non-being", "Indisposition, The Dead Without Graves", "Eternal Flies".

4- Karl Marx 1818-1882. The contemporary Communist Philosopher. He was from a German-Jewish origin. Studied law then turned towards the study of Social Philosophy and Economics. He was persecuted in Germany due to his revolutionary activities and then moved to Paris and later to England where he lived. While in England he met Fredrick Engels and they worked together to produce the first Communist Charter, known as the "Communist prospectus" in 1948. He then published the first volume of his book "The Capital" in 1867. Following his demise his colleague produced volumes 2 and 3. The concise Arabic Encyclopedia V.2, P.1615, supervised by Muhammad Shafiq Gherbal. Ih'yaa Al-Turath Al-Arabi publishing house.

solved that perplexing question or at least had come closer to it?

All creations work... and try to find work for thems-elves, even if merely to live...

Therefore, to be engaged in looking for food is work, to search for water is work, to hunt for prey in the forest by the fittest animal, in order to eat, is work. The prey's attempt to escape and hide in order to protect itself from the danger of the beast is also considered work. What then, is the difference between Man and Beast?

On any account this question (Who am I?) remained primarily unsolved... be it satisfactorily or sufficiently.

And neither what Sartre or Marx had presented quenched Man's thirst in his quest to know himself.

A Naive Stratagem and a Weak Position

It seems that every time man-made materialistic philosophy lacked strength in solving a said question, it resorts to the stratagem which says: "The Death of the Gods."

"Nietzsche"[5] the Philosopher for example, has this to say about Man: *"All the Gods have died and we have no hope except for the appearance of a – Superman – who is greater than a machine, this is the new Man!"*

This philosophy, although Germany's thought was affected by it in its quest to solve this question, it employed the same maneuver "The Death of the Gods" in order for the idea of Superman to surface. But even if Superman was to appear would his coming prevent that question from being asked?

While another philosopher, the like of "Kant"[6], considered

5- Fredrick Wilhelm Nietzsche 1844-1900. A German philosopher. His Philosophy is distinguished by a character of sentimentality and deep conscious. He was affected by Showainher's Philosophy and he predicted the coming of "SUPERMAN" and the Elite's esteem moral standards. He attacked Christianity because according to him, it was only suitable for the majority of people who were easily lead behind the Strongest (ask the Doctor what he means). He also holds the view that the aim is not simply this life, but rather a Powerful Life, and Man will be capable to achieve through his will a being that is above good and evil. His most famous writings were "The Birth of Tragedy" and "That is how Zarathustra spoke". He was affected by psychological disorders eventually leading to a very severe psychological illness.

6- Emmanuel Kant (1724-1804), a German philosopher who is considered one of the greatest philosophers. His work had a profound influence on German thought.

Man to be the most precious being in existence and that he was not created for something or for a purpose, but rather things – all things – were made so that man could identify himself through them.

He said: *"Work as if you are dealing with all of mankind represented in one person, or in any other person, as an end not as a mean...."*

This statement was characterized by words of praise and applause about man as the world's most valuable thing, however it did not answer the question: ***Who amI?***

Who is Man? What is he? What is his reality? and the first question remains as it is, a riddle, which humanity can not find an answer to.

Then came "Andre' Gide"[7] only to consider man to be his own lord, and that he must strive to achieve his own happiness

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Worked as a lecturer in Logic and Metaphysics. He criticized the agnostic school of thought which Hyoum's Philosophy embraced. His philosophy is known as the critical philosophy. Kant is of the view that ethical actions may not find its reward in this world , therefore, this makes it incumbent upon us to assume the eternity of the soul in order to effectuate that reward/punishment and that on the basis of believe, free will and the existence of God are justified. Kant adds that there is no existence of the creation without the belief in three things: the existence of God, immortality of the soul and reckoning after death. Thus, knowledge assumes the domain of phenomenon and morality has the realm of things in its essence. Among his most important works are "Critique of the pure mind" , "Critique of the practical mind" , "Critique of Power", "The basis of Metaphysics perspective of Ethics" (refer to the Arabic Encyclopedia V.2, pp. 1435).

7- Andrea Gide (1869-1951). A French writer. He was among the pioneers of French thought and one of the most renowned Contemporary Novel writers. He won a Noble Prize in 1947. He has many writings, and among his works are: "The Careless " and "The Narrow Door".

and personal interests away from the guidance of the dead Gods.

He tells Man: *"Be devoted to yourself and find what benefits it and makes it happy. For there is nothing more sublime than your own-self, following the death of the Gods during a bitter struggle with it!"*

According to Andrea Gide, this is how this major hurdle can be resolved. When Man transforms into a God, after the demise of the Gods.

Yet again my dear reader, this argument did not solve the riddle. For neither did the invitation given to Man to be devoted to himself solve that startling enigma nor did the invitation to achieve personal gain and happiness resolve this very question.

Not even the demise of the Gods following a bitter struggle with it as they had claimed, solved the problem, and it certainly did not resolve this long-lasting question.

Who am I? Where did I come from? Why did I come? And where to after this?

The Perplexity of Poets and Writers

If we leave philosophy aside in its state of confusion and weakness, we find that many poets and writers have also expressed the same confusion through their poetry and books, and this question became so detached from any basis of belief. In fact it became more like a time bomb inside the human brain. A bomb that will soon explode, only to cause more confusion and loss, while sometimes it is confronted by all aspects of rejection and rebellion.

At times it is encountered by a lot of anarchy, mockery and apathy. Eventually, the end of the matter will either be belief or an annihilating shock wave.

The poet Omar Khayyam[8] says:

"I was made to dress the garment of living without being consulted. And I was perplexed in it among the various thoughts.(Soon) I shall take this apparel off myself hence, not knowing why I came or where to escape?"

That is, when he takes off the garb of life – one which he did not choose to wear – will his life come to an end without realizing who he is, or why he originally came into being?

8- Abul-Fateh Omar Al-Khayyam "died in 1132". Westerners consider him the most renowned Persian poet. He was also one of the most famous Arab Mathematicians and Astronomers. He lived under the rule of the Suljock government and was a close friend of its Vizier Nizam Al-Mulk, the greatest visier of his time. His famous work "Ruba'iyat" was translated into several languages. It earned much repute amongst Intellectual circles. It was also translated several times into Arabic. A large number of authors also translated it, among them was Wadi Al-Bustani,1932. Ahmad Al-Safi al-Najaf. Al-Seba'ie. Ahmad Al-Sarraf. Ahmad Rami, Abdul-Haq Fadhel and others. The Concise Arabic Encyclopedia V.1, pp. 769.

Such a perplexed viewpoint creates within the human soul conflicting reactions....

Some of these reactions are characterized by pessimism and frustration while others give the human being the liberty to indulge in his carnal lusts and desires beyond any control or limits.

Do not preoccupy the mind with time lapsed Nor with future living, prematurely, before it comes
Take advantage of the present time itself
For there is no safety therein, in the nature of nights"[9]

These poetic verses are a plain invitation for Man to live only for his instant moment, detached from both the present and the future.

What becomes more important for Man though, is to achieve for himself the biggest share of temptations and desires. He must not ask "who am I?", "where did I come from?" or "where to from here?"

Whenever these questions are raised, the only answers are that of confusion, anxiety and loss. That is, by becoming

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9- During a radio talk, I quoted some verses of the poetry of Omar Al-Khayyam. Following the talk I was contacted by phone by Dr. Abdul-Kader Al-Marounsi, lecturer of Persian literature at the Teacher's College in the Iranian city of Karaj. He said, "the blasphemous poetry attributed to Omar Al-Khayyam is in fact foreign to his work of poetry. Furthermore, many critics have confirmed that the man was a good Muslim, whose Islam and belief were sound. He was even called "The testimony of Truth", during his time". I therefore felt , that as part of literary etiquette, I should document herein Dr. Al-Marounsi's comments, particularly that he, i.e. Omar Al-Khayyam, is in the hands of his Lord and does not have the means to defend himself. Although there is no evidence now or references to corroborate the above (i.e. up to the date the book was printed), Dr. Al-Marounsi has given an undertaking to provide these references for my perusal, so that the truth will prevail and in fairness to the Poet Omar Al-Khayyam and to exonerate him from what has been ascribed to him.

immersed in the oblivion of desire, and by devouring worldly pleasures, Man escapes the mind's earnest quest and longing for true answers.

Extinguish your heart's flame with luscious drinking

For the days are but similar to clouds

Our lives are but a phantom of fantasy

Earn therefore your share from it before your youth withers away

Let us leave Omar Al-Khayyam for a while and let us contemplate the words of *Ilaya Abou-Madhi*[10]

We will find that these perplexing questions preoccupied his mind, causing him great mental and emotional anxiety. It confused him, caused him to roam around, and took him East and West. In the end, he returned with a concept that brought back to the mind the philosophy of skepticism. This is a philosophy that deals with the problems that faces the mind and reality not by confronting them, or by attempting to understand them and find solutions for them, but rather by a method of avoidance, with a simple statement such as "I do not know."

I have come, not knowing where I came from

10- An Arab emigrant poet (1889-1947). He was born in Lebanon and later moved to Egypt during the days of his youth. He went to the United states and died there. He took part in the activities of the Pen Association. He established Al-Samir Arabic Newspaper in New York. He has a number of poetry divans. The fist to be published was "Tithkar Al-Madhi" in Alexandria in 1911. The other three poetry collections were published in America. Abou-Madhi's Divan 1916, Al-Jadawel,1927. Al-Khama'el,1946. The later two contain the most refined work of poetry, where he talks about love and passion for nature. He was also dominated by the tones of doubt, perplexity, and distinct sorrow which is benevolent in the poetry written abroad. Look up the Concise Arabic Encyclopedia V.1, p. 39.

However, I just came

I saw a road in front of me, thus I walked

And I shall keep walking, whether I wanted to or not.

How did I come..?
How did I find my way..?
I do not know.

Why do I not know?
I do not know.

This is how, with complete simplicity, and in one sentence, the problem was overcome. Why do we do not understand... *I do not know.*

We find that confusion, doubt, reluctance and anxiety have a common denominator in answering such questions. There is no logical, rational reply which carries any proof within its bounds to convince Man and extricate him from the depth of bewilderedness and loss, in order that it would eventually lead him to the shore of safety.

When one of the other poets tried to solve the riddle, he did not continue to pursue his intellectual quest till the end. Instead he stopped at the notion which says: "life is a riddle" - a deep mystery with multiple walls, where people are standing around it, knocking and beating at the doors but no one is there to hear or respond. It is a riddle that even geniuses were baffled with.

The poet says:
We have come into the world,
As the One Who raised the heaven had Decreed

Without knowing the real secret, whether we lived or died

Inevitably one day we will be crushed by death and embraced by extinction

And tomorrow, time shall cause us to scatter like an atom in space

Only to encounter the worms that shall meet us, woe for such a miserable meeting

We shall be trembled over by foot, be it after poverty or wealth

Your world is but a mysterious enigma, even the geniuses were baffled with.

The reality, my dear reader, is that this perplexity had originally arisen as a result of all of the above mentioned people, poets and philosophers whose views we have examined. Confusion and anxiety did not deal with the question either inwardly or outwardly, nor did it deal with it in a rational or **sensible way.**

Their endeavors only brought further confusion and doubt, followed by anarchy, neglect and absolute non-acceptance of anything and everything. Such is the rebellion and upheaval against every truth and value. On one hand, this is done by exceeding proper bounds and overestimating man's ability over everything, including the ability to create himself. While on the other hand, it is done by a cheap maneuver and a bare claim about the death of the Gods, following a bitter battle with them, as they have alleged.

The fact of the matter is that such detours and evasions regarding these perplexing questions accomplished nothing! In fact it did not accord the mind with any sound proof. It did not bestow upon the soul tranquility and peace. It did not even confer upon the sentiment of calmness and contentment.

These perplexing questions continue to exist only to confront Man further and further with his various intellectual, cultural and cognizant levels, as if they were a destiny that can not be escaped or set free from.

Who am I?
Where did I come from...?
Why did I come...?
Where shall I go...?

These questions will remain without convincing answers as long as Man deals with them on account of his bare mind, without having to refer back to the law of heaven. The mind alone can not stand independently when attempting to comprehend all the facts, even though it may accomplish some. The intellect therein is therefore not sufficient nor capable of giving sound cognate judgments over all matters directly linked to the human soul, nor what encompasses it in terms of moral and spiritual dimensions, be it conspicuous or obscure. Nor in as far as what it also embraces in terms of its capabilities and visible or hidden natural dispositions.

Thus, the mind does not have the potential to give sound judgment about the metaphysical or transcendent world.

Instead, the mind to this very moment, as we approach the end of the 20th century, and despite all of the contemporary scientific tools, fell short of giving conclusive judgments about even the most tangible of physical issues. Although it may have accomplished numerous achievements in the physical world, nevertheless there are still – amid experimental science – many unsolved problems. Such as the question of some viruses, the abnormal growth of cells that reach uncontrollable measures, and the break out of extinct microbes which Man thought he

had in exterminated (such as Tuberculosis and Malaria microbes, etc.).

Subsequently, if this mind with its limited ability in a limited time and in a limited environment failed to give irrefutable judgments about physical matters, how can the mind then give us unequivocal and true rulings about another world which transcends above matter, such as the " Invisible World"?

Therefore, there must be a narrative transmission[11] to accompany the mind, provided that these narrative traditions are sound and authentic beyond flawlessness that no other book on the face of this earth has enjoyed.

This however, can not be accomplished or realized except through an infallible revelation that can present to us conclusive and true rulings from another world that transcends matter, i.e. the Invisible World. There is no literature that has enjoyed credibility, both historically and realistically, and met all the conditions of flawless scientific authentication, like the Qur'an has.

Let us therefore, draw closer to the enigma through the tools of the mind represented by experimental science, and the tools of narrative transmission represented by the noble texts, be it from the Qur'an or the Prophetic narrative Traditions.

11- What is meant by narrative transmission therein, is the inspiration and revelation from heaven. i.e. The Qur'an, or the Prophetic narrative Traditions.

The Ailments of the Soul and the Qur'anic Remedy for it.

In parable with the methodology adopted by doctors when prescribing medicine and diagnosing illness, we shall present a Qur'anic remedy that the infallible revelation came down with, which was then given to us by the noble Prophet – the physician of the heart and the mentor of the soul.

However, just before we present that remedy, we must first learn that the human soul is like a house. If the inhabitants of this house do not maintain it with constant due care, attention and cleanliness, it will certainly become exposed to dirt and dust. Insects and vermin could even inhabit it, and it may even become a breeding ground for animals such as stray cats, dogs, etc. Likewise the human soul, if deprived of care and attention, is similar to a ruined house which is left exposed to the elements, and open to intrusion by anything seeking a place to roam in. This is due to the absence of a resident, who will look after it, or a guard who will protect and defend it.

The Creator of that soul has pointed out to us that this soul is susceptible to good and evil. It is naturally disposed to be as such; it rises and falls, ascends and descends, excels and declines – all inline with what good or evil it is exposed to. It is up to the individual concerned to make appropriate choices for its care and discipline, and to provide it with all the shades of virtue and reverence that will purify it and elevate it in worth and status. Only then can Man obtain salvation in this World and in the Hereafter. Otherwise it will be a total disappointment,

with failure and complete loss in this World and misfortune in the Hereafter.

The Almighty said:

"And by the NAFS (the Soul), and Him who perfected it in proportion; then He showed it what is wrong for it and what is good for it; indeed he succeeds who purifies his own soul (i.e. obeys and performs all that Allah ordered and doing righteous good deeds. And indeed he fails who corrupts his own soul (i.e. disobeys what Allah has ordered and doing every kind of evil wicked deeds)"[12]

Therefore, all souls are susceptible to both good and evil. Not one single soul was protected from that natural disposition save for the souls of the prophets. None other than the soul of the Messenger (p.b.u.h) alone was apt to receive anything but the waves of goodness... every other soul was inclined towards good or evil.

The Holy Qur'an points out to us that the Man is the greatest creature on earth. Such a great creature must maintain himself through care, attention and protection. Thus, he is obliged to search for the best and most appropriate ways for his protection.

12- Ash-Shams 91: 7-10

Guarding and Protecting the Soul

How are we then going to find such methods and procedures?

Where do we search for them? Do we find them in an earthly philosophy? No... why? Because the preservation of this soul in a proper and sound way cannot primarily be accomplished except through the plant that produced it and shaped it in the first place. And the One who made it is the Almighty Allah... therefore, its preservation and the best and most fitting method for its protection and care will not and cannot be accomplished except through the plant that it was made in, and created and produced within. Every other maintenance or preservation carried out outside that plant and in a way contrary to what was defined for it will be doomed, and shall not achieve the peace, happiness, and satisfaction it requires and deserves.

Thus, he who takes a careful look at the Qur'an will find that it is a Book of guidance, a Book about monotheism and filled with advice. It is in fact a map and a compass, leading the human soul to safety at times when it feels lost or is being lead astray. It is a Book that defines for the human soul how to be in a safe refuge away from any anxiety or abstraction. How to protect itself from any satanic attacks. How to deal with others. And how to carry out its duty in the most appropriate way.

It is a Book that gives the human soul that comfort it requires, and relieves it from the burden of asking about the beginning and the end by offering convincing and persuasive answers. It comprises of facts, which are endorsed and believed in by the unimpaired natural disposition, and which science is substantiating as truth day by day.

Through such facts it provides the human soul with the answers in reference to each and every perplexing enigma and question. It quenches its thirst in its quest for true knowledge away from any random stumbling and away from the trails of doubts and delusions....

Let us after this preamble begin with the first prescription for curing the human soul from its ailments in accordance with the Divine infallible revelation:

"O people! There has come to you indeed an admonition from your Lord, a healing for what is in the hearts, a guidance and a mercy for the believers"[13]

It is noticeable that this prescription consists of four types of divine cures:

1 – The first cure is ***Admonition.***
However, this particular cure has been regrettably misused and abused. In fact we have misused it, and even misunderstood its proper meaning right from the beginning.

Because, does admonition simply constitute a sermon that is delivered inside a mosque by an Imam or an Orator or even by a preacher, be it done through a set of well arranged words or otherwise? Well received or not? Reasonable or unreasonable? And then does the question that is being addressed simply come to an end after half an hour or so, with every one continuing with his or her own business?

Is this what ***Admonition*** then stands for? No....

In fact when we come to understand the concept of ***Admonition*** in this way, we would have misapplied and caused

13- Yunus 10: 57

harm to Allah's divine way.

What does ***Admonition*** then stand for?

It is a methodology and a system of knowledge that makes up the general features of the Muslim Identity in regard to his thought, his understanding, and his awareness about the realities of things and his judgment over all matters. The concept of ***Admonition*** is thus a methodology that re-establishes the intellectual, behavioral and mental makeup in the life of a Muslim.

The Framework of Admonition

Admonition, as a system of knowledge works in three different domains:

1. The domain of the inner-self.

2. The domain of the environment that surrounds Man.

3. The domain of this vast and wide Universe.

The First Domain

As for the first domain, which is the domain of the inner-self, we find that the Holy Qur'an begins primarily by introducing Man to his own-self.

Who are you? or Who am I?
Where did you come from?
Why did you come?
What is your message?

And this time that you live in, when did it actually begin? When is it going to come to an end? Does it simply start at the phase of birth and ends by the stage of death? Or does it extend well within the past to a stage beyond the phase of formation and prior to the stage of inception within the womb of the mother...?

These are the questions that were raised by the mind and are still being raised now and will be raised in the future. It is these sorts of questions that perplexed the philosophers when they tried to address them from an earthly perspective. When they failed to seek divine guidance from Heaven in their quest in identifying Man from the time of his beginning to his end, from the time of his genesis to the time of his formation.

Unless there are rational and definite answers to these questions defect in intellect, anxiety within oneself and irregularity in behavior will always continue to exist.

In fact Man will remain forever suffering from mental derangement, intellectual defectiveness and abnormal behavior, because conduct and behavior represent a practical interpretation of a particular notion in the mind. If therefore the notion is wrong, then the conduct will also be wrong. As a consequence of the above, perplexity, anxiety, hesitation and doubt have come about.

The methodology of knowing how to practically apply the concept of ***Admonition*** will offer man a cure and healing. It will save him and redirect his mental energy – which has been dissipated in perplexity and wonder – into beneficial deeds and will subsequently say to him: I will relieve you from all the questions that you have been unable to find answers for….

Who are you? You are the master of existence, and the master of this Universe, but only when you become God's servant.

You are the king and the master that must be obeyed, and everything in the universe is subjugated for your service. The sun, the moon, the stars, the oceans, the earth, the heavens and everything that exists are there to serve you, and God has created them for your own sake.

"And has subjected to you all that is in the heaven and all that is in earth; it is all as a favor and kindness from Him"[14]

14- Al-Jathi'yah 45: 13

"Allah is He who has created the heavens and the earth and sends down water (rain) from the sky, and thereby brought forth fruits as provisions for you; He has made the ships to be of service to you, that they may sail through the sea by His Command; and He has made rivers (also) to be of service to you. He has made the sun and the moon, both constantly pursuing their courses, to be of service to you; and He has made the night and the day, to be of service to you. And He gave you of all that you asked for, and if you count the Blessings of Allah, never will you be able to count them. Verily! Man is indeed an extreme wrong-doer, a disbeliever"[15]

It is quite noticeable how the word (for you) has been repeated a number of times in the Qur'anic text in an attempt to remind Man of his position, importance and message... because he is indeed the master that must be obeyed. Not only among the slaves and servants, but in fact he is the master that must be obeyed among the adhering masters. As long as he remains a slave to God and acts as his vicegerent in order to establish justice and develop the earth in the Name of God. While simultaneously accomplishing the conditions of true servitude well within him.

"And Behold when your Lord said to the angels: Verily, I am going to place Man as a vicegerent (mankind's generation after generation)"[16]

"And indeed We have honored the children of Adam (i.e. mankind) and We have carried them on land and sea. We have provided them with lawful good things, and have

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15- Ibrahim 14: 32-34
16- Al-Baqarah 2: 30

preferred them above many of those whom We have created with a marked preference" [17]

Once Man goes out of this very scope of servitude to God, he becomes more worthless in the sight of God than the most insignificant of insects that exist in this universe.

"They have hearts wherewith they understand not, they have eyes wherewith they see not, they have ears wherewith they hear not (the truth). They are like cattle, nay even more astray; those! They are the heedless ones." [18]

"And recite (O Muhammad) to them the story of whom We gave Our proofs, but he threw them away, so Satan followed him up, and he became of those who went astray. Had We willed, We would have surely have elevated him therewith but he clung to the earth and followed his own vain desires. So his description is the description of a dog: if you drive him away, he lolls his tongue out, or if you leave him alone, he (still) lolls his tongue out. Such is the description of the people who reject Our proofs! So relate the stories, perhaps they may reflect. Evil is the parable of the people who rejected Our signs, and used to wrong themselves." [19]

This is the first question – who am I, or who are you? Indeed the divine way has answered my question: I am Allah's Vicegerent on earth. He created me with His own Gracious Hand, bestowed upon me a soul that he Had decreed, gave me life and the ability to move about. He provided me with a system, a plan, a messenger and a message.

17- Al-Israa 17: 70
18- Al-Aa'raf 7: 179
19- Al-Aa'raf 7: 175-177

Where Did I Come From

As for the second question, where did I come from? We find that when The Gracious Qur'an embarked on answering this question it used the realm of the human soul itself in substantiating the truth it had brought forth. The Qur'anic discourse on that subject was emphatically manifest, extremely profound, and highly effective.

It did not lead Man into philosophical details, or hidden intellectual allies, where the real truth will consequently be lost and Man will be left alone to wander.

The Qur'an did not narrate to Man complicated scientific laboratory experiments which can be only comprehended by the duly qualified graduates from science academies... it did not pursue this course, rather it utilized things which are familiar to all people and which are found in all of them.

Where did I come from... this is the question! The answer therefore is:

"We have indeed created you, then why do you believe not"

and the proof ***"Then tell Me (about) the human semen, that you emit."*** It is the sperm, this spermatozoon which is a tiny cell that cannot be seen except by a microscope. In fact, it is magnified thousands of times so that the naked eye can see it as big as the size of a pinhead. Yet despite its minuteness, it carries within it all the hereditary genes. It holds the masculine and feminine characteristics, the color of the eyes, the color of the hair and whether this hair is straight or curly, the color of the skin and other

distinguishing features.

Where are all these characteristics concealed, they are all found within the spermatozoon? Where is the human intellect found? It is there in the spermatozoon?

Where are the cells of the ear, the cells for the nervous system, the cells for the urinary and reproductive systems, the cells that form the eyes, the teeth, the gustatory sense, the smell and other faculties and talents that distinguishes the human being and makes him a master. Hence, without it he becomes disabled and in need of others and cannot be self-dependent.

We revert to the Noble text: the realm of the text is found in fact within the human essence itself:

"We created you, then why do you believe not? Then tell Me (about) the human semen that you emit... Is it you who create it (i.e. make this semen into a perfect human being), or are We the Creator?" [20]

A discourse for the human soul about the soul, which determines the starting point, the origin of creation and formation. A discourse about the Supreme Power which has been profoundly manifested in its creative ability through this creature, as well as being manifested in its creativity and knowledge in all aspects of existence.

It is the one that stands alone in transforming non-existence into existence. Non-being into being. Death into life. Motionless into movement. And it elevates the value of something contemptuous (i.e. the sperm), to become a dignified human being that assumes his proper role in this universe.

20- Al-Waqi'aah 56: 57-59

"Did We not create you from a fluid of no value? Then We placed it in a place of safety (womb). For a known period (determined by gestation)? So We did measure, and We are the Best to measure (the things)."[21]

"And indeed *We created man (i.e. Adam) out of an extract of clay (water and earth). Thereafter We made him as a Nutfah (mixed drops of the male and the female sexual discharge) (and put it) in a safe place (womb of the woman). Then We created the Nutfah into a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood), and We created the clot into a little lump of flesh. We created out of that little lump of flesh bones, then We clothed the bones with flesh. Then We brought it forth as another creation. So blessed be Allah, the Best of creators."*[22]

21- Al-Mursalat 77: 20-23
22- Al-Mu'minun 23: 12-14

Some of the Attributes that are Common between Allah and Man

After Man is formed – into another creation with God's will – Almighty God then bestows upon him some of His qualities and grants him some of the manifestation of His Gracious Attributes. However the above statement must be put in line with what Allah said in describing Himself when He said: ***"There is nothing like unto Allah, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer."***[23]

He grants him hearing... And Allah is All-Hearing.

He grants him sight... And Allah is All-Seeing.

He grants him life...And Allah is All-Living.

He grants him knowledge...And Allah is the Omniscient.

However, since these attributes are part of the divinity (i.e. self-created) of the Almighty Allah, it is incidental in Man, i.e. it is changeable in Man and not permanent and invariable.

Allah also grants him some power and some fortune through various talents. He then gives Man wealth as a result of his earning and efforts in employing these talents and faculties. Such qualities found in people may lead them to go out of the scope of their human nature unless a framework of a sound creed governs their lives, and fences them with a hedge of knowledge so Man could know his Lord and learn to know himself. Where he realizes that God in fact is the One, Who bestowed whatever he owns upon him. The One Who has created everything and then proportioned it, and who has measured pre-ordainments for each and every thing and then provided guidance

23- Surah Al-Shura V.11

(i.e. showed mankind the right and wrong paths, and also guided the animals to their pasture).

And that Man's existence in the journey of this worldly life is only transitory; that there is a different life after this world that is eternal and everlasting; where Man will be judged in it for what his hands have earned and that he will be punished for the bad with bad and rewarded for the good with good.

The Cure for Conceit and Vainglory

In drawing a link between life and death, self-conceit and arrogance in the Man will be put to a limit. It will not avail the human soul with the opportunity to become conceited and arrogant and subsequently step out of its limited being. Where it begins to think that with its intellect, knowledge and various achievements it acquired, it had in fact taken over matters and is now able to be in control of everything. That is why we find that the address about death in the Qur'an, was linked to the beginning of life in relation to the tale of human existence:

"We have created you, then why do you believe not... then tell me (about) the human semen that you emit... Is it you who create it (i.e. make this semen into perfect human being), or are We the Creator? We have decreed death to you all, and We are not unable to transfigure you and create you in (forms) that you know not."[24]

However, Man often has a tendency to forget or become inadvertent about the reality of death. Therefore, his own daily need for sleep, which is a necessity that Man cannot repel away from himself, becomes a constant reminder to him about the reality of death because it represents one of the phenomenon of the Divine Law of Subjugation. Similarly, as Man is unable to keep sleep away from himself, he will also be unable to drive away death from himself. Sleep is thus but a reminder and a preparatory stage for death which we practice every night. Sleep is therefore one of the phenomenon of the major Law, the Divine Law of Subjugation, i.e. "Death."

24- Al-Waqi'aah 56: 57-61

The decree of death herein as linked to the beginning of life is but to free the human being from self-conceit as we have pointed out earlier. It acts as a reminder for Mankind about the ultimate Divine Law of Subjugation that overcomes everyone without exception.

Sleep overcomes young and old, poor and rich and without it Man will not be able to go on with life for it constitutes 33% of the average life of any human being on earth. It also represents one of God's signs of creation and one of his important favors in order for man's material life to continue in a well-proportioned manner away from any imbalance or disorder. That is why we see that Allah has bestowed it upon his creation when he declared:

"And among His signs is the sleep that you take by night and by day, and your seeking of His Bounty. Verily, in that are indeed signs for people who contemplate."[25]

"And it is He Who makes the night a cover for you, sleep (as) a repose, and makes the day NUSHUR (i.e. getting up and going about here and there for daily work etc. after one's sleep at night or like resurrection after one's death)"[26]

The word "repose" (in Arabic Subat) literally means rest. Thus sleep is considered the minor form of death. This is the very reason why the Qur'an has in fact ascribed to it this name when it stated:

"It is Allah Who takes away the souls at the time of their death, and those that die not during their sleep. He keeps those (souls) for which He has ordained death and sends the rest for a term appointed. Verily, in this are signs for people

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25-Ar-Rum 30: 23
26- Al-Fur'qan 25: 47

who ponder.”[27]

Sleep herein – according to the Qur'anic text – must be thought of profoundly by the mind and the intellect ***(Verily, in this are signs for people who ponder)*** not on its own as a concept that stands alone but for the vast meanings it holds. When it cries out by a thousand tongues and points out with a thousand gestures to highlight Man’s absolute incapability before this very Law!

Thus, as a person sleeps and wakes up, he also dies and is raised from the dead and is resurrected.

Therefore, in the same manner man is unable to overcome sleep, he is also unable to immune himself from death when the appointed time arrives.

When all of these meanings are brought together into the mind and are hastily recalled from one’s own memory, they bring back to the Man his consciousness in its normal proportion, his balance, value and worth. They dispel within him the feeling of arrogance, of being filled with wealth, and self-conceit about extensive fame and glory. At the same time it protects him with humility in the domains of knowledge and its exploration, to enable him to safely avoid frantic arrogance in order to make him aware that he is controlled by Divine laws and rules day and night. In fact, during every minute of his daily life....

This is why the Qur'anic text in the tale of life was linked to death, for Almighty God knows that this creature is overtaken by arrogance, overbearance and tyranny, while causing mischief on Earth. Thus it was incumbent that Man be constantly reminded

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27- Az-Zumar 39: 42

about death in the early stages of existence – the death which awaits him and will bring him forward before God, when he must account for his actions in life, whether it was long or short:

"We have decreed death to you all, and We are not unable to transfigure you and create you in (forms) that you know not."[28]

28- Al-Waqi'aa 56: 60-61

The Second Domain

Birth & Death are an Extension of Existence

Belief in God is an Inborn Trait, which the Human Spirits in the Past had Confessed to.

As life does not come to an end with death, it also does not begin from the moment of birth as some people may believe. Among the unique features found in Islam is that it is a religion which stretches life well into the depth of time and right through to eternity... existence well before his birth. His existence in this world is but an amalgamation between the physical matter and the spirit.

This world is merely one of the stages that represent Man's existence, and one of its rings and phases. Man's existence stretches well into a time before the stage of formation in the mother's womb. Thus, his existence in this world is but an extension of his previous existence when the human soul enveloped the body, hence this soul had a prior existence when it confessed to the Lordship of God during that particular time. The Holy Qur'an described this stage as follows:

*"And (remember) when your Lord brought forth from the children of Adam, from their loins, their seeds (*or from Adam's loins his offspring) and made them testify as to themselves (saying): "Am I not your Lord?" They said: "Yes! We testify," lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection: "Verily, We have been unaware of this". Or lest you should

say: "It was only our fathers aforetime who associated others as partners in worship along with Allah, and we were (merely their) descendants after them; will You then destroy us because of the deeds of men who practiced Al-Batil (i.e. polytheism and committing crimes and sins, invoking and worshiping others besides Allah)?"[29]

In the above, is indeed a hint:

"That the spirits of all human beings had indeed existed before the physical bodies were created. Where confessing to God's existence forms a part of the necessities of its essence and realities. Such knowledge therefore, is not one where acquisition of it is learnt or solicited, and that is what is meant when speaking about "taking the covenant from them." However, after the spirits had entered the bodies, they are then required to be engaged in finding out its source of knowledge, whereby it may recall that reality either by recollection and comprehension, or it may not the least recollect at all."[30]

Thus, God the Almighty has created in Man, from the very moment of his formation, the ability to perceive the proofs of the Oneness of God.

He further made in the inborn movement of Man's thought, the aspiration to attain that reality and accomplish it, if Man really freed himself from the impediments that enters his innate character and consequently distorts it.

29- Al-Araf 7: 172-173

30- Refer to the Interpretation of Ghara'eb Al-Qur'an wa Ragha'eb Al- Fur'qaan P.83,V.9 written by Imam Nizam Al-Deen Al-Hassan Bin Muhammad Bin Al-Hussain Al-Qummi Al-Naisabouri. Died in 728H. Revised and verified by Al-Sheikh/ Ibrahim At'wah Awad. Al-Babi Al-Halabi Publishing House.

In that Qur'anic verse, there is proof that belief in God, the One, is deep-rooted within the mind's natural disposition only if it was left to think for itself and was free from doubts that emanate in it as a result of negligence and deficiency in vision. Or from doubts cast at it by the misguided ones be it intentionally or unintentionally.[31]

There also appears in that text, Man's attestation that Almighty God has made them testify as to themselves when they were still in the realm of spirits, where each and every single spirit felt its own essence and existence. When they all testified and said: *"Yes, indeed You are our Lord and Creator."*

"This covenant has taken place, when they were in the realm of atoms." It is therefore proof that testifying to Allah as the only Lord is a natural disposition within the essence of all human beings which the Creator had deposited therein, and they attested to it against themselves as a consequence of their own existence and what they sense deeply within themselves in as far as this fact is concerned.[32]

Divine Messages, however, are but a reminder to those who turn astray from their initial natural disposition. Thus, there is a constant need to be reminded and cautioned.

Consequently, Monotheism is a covenant that was concluded between the natural dispositions of human beings and their Creator from the very moment of their formation.

31- Refer to the Interpretation of A-Tah'reer Wa Tanweer V.9, P168-170 with alteration by the Learned Imam Al-Sheikh Mohammad Al-Taher Bin Aa'shoor. Tunisian Publishing House.

32- Refer to the Qur'anic Interpretation of the Qur'an, P.515,V.2. With alteration by AbdulKarim Al-Khateeb. Al-Fikr Al-Araabi Publishing House.

Subsequently, they will have no argument or plea in breaching the covenant even if God did not send to them prophets to remind and warn them. However, the Almighty in His infinite mercy, had decreed not to only entrust them to their natural disposition, for it could deviate from the truth, but also equally decreed not to entrust them to their own minds, which He had bestowed upon them, for they may likewise be lead astray. Instead He sent to them Messengers as bearers of good news and warning in order that mankind should have no plea against Allah after the Messengers.[33]

The existence of Man is therefore nothing but an extension of his previous origin when he was in the realm of spirits prior to the soul assuming the garb of this palpable physical body.

The spirit is but from the decree of Allah and its origin is from Him. It is not made from things that are perceptible through the senses. However, It is only perceived through its influence and impression that it leaves on the body.

This body is made from a substance that comes from earth, that is why the spirit and the body each return to their respective place of origin:

"And they ask you (O Muhammad [p.b.u.h & h.f] concerning the Ruh (the Spirit), say: "the Ruh (the Spirit): its knowledge is with my Lord. And of Knowledge, you (mankind) have been given only a little."[34]

"O (Soul) the one in (complete) rest and satisfaction!

33- Refer to Al-Thilal Interpretation of the Qur'an. Written by the late Sayyed Qutub. V.3, P1391. Tenth Edition,1402H- 1982. Al-Shuruq Publishing House.
34- Al-Is'raa 17: 85

Come back to your Lord, well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing unto Him! Enter then among My (honored) servants, and enter my Paradise"[35]

As for the body, it also returns to its place of origin:

"Thereof (the earth) We created you, and into it We shall return you, and from it We shall bring you out once again."[36]

The personal pronoun in the above verse refers to the earth of which Man's physical dimension was created from.

And after the Spirit enters the body at the beginning of this worldly life, and Man begins to enjoy his share of living in this world, death confronts him.

Not to represent the final end and the beginning of obliteration, according to some materialistic philosophies that had severed their ties with the other world. These philosophies that forgot or were oblivious to life's various phases, became heedless to the call of their own inborn state, and blocked their ears to shun away pure impartial logic, yielded to desires. They denied the very existence of God and their founders said, just as the Qur'an described them:

"And they say: "There is nothing but our life of this world, we die and live and nothing destroys us except Ad-Dahr (time). And they have no knowledge of it, they only conjecture."[37]

Death, herein, is but the beginning of a new phase, just as birth was equally the beginning of a new phase and a start of a new stage in the many stages of human existence.

35- Surah Al-Fajr 89: 27-30
36- Taha 20: 55
37- Al-Jathe'yaa 45: 24

Belief in this reality therefore helps Man to have an equilibrium in this world. It dislodges from him the causes of frustration and despair. How miserable this dreadful tragedy becomes if death was the final chapter to the story of existence. Exalted is the Almighty to cause things to be so! Verily His justice must take place in the end before the creations settle down in their last abode, either in the Garden of Bless or in the Abyss.

The Third Question: Why Did I Come?

Animals eat just like Man does, and they receive their share of sustenance just like you do, however they remain aloof from the worries of how to get their share of sustenance.

They procreate, equally as Man does, however they stand aloof from having to worry about how to care for their infants.

They are subjected for Man's use just like we were made to come to each other's service, yet they are free from fearing the creation. They stand aloof from the humiliation of need and abominable hypocrisy and live with one straight face and express themselves spontaneously and clearly.

They are affected by illness, just like we are, however they stand aloof from fearing death. They are affected by loss, just as human beings are inflicted by it, yet they remain aloof from apprehension.

Will Man, therefore, transform into a mere rational being during the cycle of life to only ascend the ladder of creation by virtue of his ability to speak! If that is the case, then an animal becomes better than him and its fortune and share of this world is far greater than him, but is that really so....

Some philosophies have – with deep regret – adopted such primitive views about Man.

Other Religions prior to the advent of Islam attempted to correct this idea and amend its defects. However, alteration and distortion that reached out and penetrated them, transformed

them in the end to the same ominous fate as to their view in defining Man.

Then Islam was introduced, placing matters in their proper place, including highlighting and defining Man's mission and duty on earth.

Man according to the Islamic ideology is none other than God's vicegerent on earth. His existence in this world is linked to a very important message, where he alone as an individual, bears full responsibility to ensure its accomplishment.

He existed to accomplish God's vicegerency on earth, for he is the most developed of all creations in rank and order, and in being qualified for the position of a vicegerent. However, he must first fulfill his true servitude to God so that he will be fit to hold such a position.

Knowledge is the Prim Qualification to Hold the Post of a Vicegerent

This servitude can not be accomplished simply on account of rejoicing the name of that which has appointed or elected him as a vicegerent. Rather, knowledge is required to realize this vicegerency. For this vicegerency can not be assigned to him so that he inhabits the earth, develops life, establishes a virtuous society and accomplishes justice, except through knowledge.

Due to this, Islam considered pure intelligence mixed with malicious intentions and inclinations, as evil.

It deemed religiosity accompanied with ignorance, not with standing sincerity of intentions, as malice.

It regarded knowledge that is severed from God and divinity, as wicked.

It held that wealth which is associated with extravagance and opulence, as vicious.

It held that poverty accompanied with idleness, weakness and apathy, as harmful.

It deemed technical progress that is utilized in coercing people, dominating them and depriving them from their rights, as immoral.

It also considered the backwardness that dispossesses its people from defending their faith and dignity as noxious.

Therefore, Man must attain an integration of values within his personality to hold the post of a vicegerent. This is so that he becomes a well-balanced individual within himself, within the surrounding environment, and within the elements of existence around him. This is necessary in order to for him to become fit so they he may fulfill his mission, accomplish this vicegerency, inhibit the earth, develop life and establish a virtuous society.

To achieve this goal, God has endowed him with the fundamentals of this knowledge, and taught him the names of things and favored him in preference to Angels in regard to this type of knowledge, as the Qur'an has stated:

"And (remember) when your Lord said to the angels: "Verily, I am going to place a vicegerent on earth." They said: "Will you place therein those who will make mischief therein and shed blood, while we glorify You with praises and thanks (Exalted be You above all that they associate with You as partners) and sanctify You." He (Allah) said: "I know that which you know not"... And He taught Adam all the names (of everything), then He turned to the angels and said "Tell Me the names of these if you are truthful." They (angels) said: "Glory be to you, we have no knowledge except what you have taught us. Verily, it is You, the All-Knower, the All-Wise." He said: "O Adam! Inform them of their

names," and when he had informed them of their names, He said: "Did I not tell you that I know the unseen in the heavens and the earth, and I know what you reveal and what you have been concealing?"[38]

Thereafter, he must increase his knowledge, develop himself, and invest profitably in his talents, for it is impossible for him to accomplish this vicegerency, with all its dimensions in as far as inhabiting the earth is concerned, without knowledge.

Accomplishing justice and establishing a divine society is not possible except through knowledge.

It is worthwhile and deserving on his part to respond to the call of his natural disposition in acknowledging the One who had created him, placed him as a vicegerent on earth and entrusted him with the responsibility to inhabit and develop it.

It is also worthy of him to fully comprehend the nature of the message which is directly linked to his duty on this world.

It is equally important for him to be aware of the place that he was chosen for in order to achieve this task as a vicegerent, i.e. this vast universe, and to really persevere in his quest to find the tools that enable him to master, control and take command over it.

Herein, we find that after the Qur'an had introduced Man to himself, by using the realm of his own-self to acquaint him with his own beginning, moved towards the realm of the surrounding environment to open his eyes to the favors that exists in it. The favours which represent to him the necessities of life that he is unable to survive without. These essentials are in fact represented

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38- Al-Baqa'rah 2: 30-33

in water, agriculture and fire.

The Qur'an did not draw our attention towards these essentials simply as life's basic assets. It in fact produced with its own unique style, a type of cohesion between these assets and between getting to know the Almighty Creator. He Who founded and fashioned them. And to perceive through them - in view of the fact that these assets are elements found within nature's living order – proof of Allah's infinite ability to create and make what He wills. That He alone is the Sovereign Master and Protector over the laws of the universe and the principles of existence.

These laws and principles do not under any circumstances deviate from His will for He is the One who created them and compelled them to operate. This is the first important point in regard to this subject.

The second point is that the surrounding environment, together with what it contains in terms of tangible things, must represent a window where the mind can glance into another world which is inconsequential. That is, the metaphysical world. Yet this glimpse into the metaphysical world is not a long quest of simply being immersed and assimilated into unseen things. To such an extent where the mind will eventually come back with nothing worthwhile mentioning, because the nature and essence of the metaphysical world is beyond intellectual perception. It is therefore simply a glimpse. A glimpse that discovers and learns that God is the source of all goodness and creativity, and that Man, the surrounding environment, nature around him and the vast wide universe are all but originated and founded by God.

Therefore, it is worthwhile for Man to learn who his Creator and founder of this universe is. And that this Creator alone is the founder of Man, the environment and the vast environment that

surrounds him, and that He is the God that ought to be recognized, celebrated and obeyed. Equally, as the Qur'an spoke the truth in its discourse about Man's essence and presented to us a challenge, it also uttered the truth and proved to be credible in the domain of nature, the environment and the broad universe. Thus, when it relates to Man information about another world, such a world which will be inhabited by the obedient and the redeemed ones who will be blessed, while the unbelievers, the hypocrites and the oppressors will be doomed, its account is supported by a thousand and one proofs.

These proofs are many and they begin:

Firstly, within the soul;

Secondly, from life's components and means of subsistence; and

Thirdly, from nature's own elements and the order of the universe.

Man should therefore be realistic and honest with himself, and must not disbelief or be arrogant, otherwise he will find himself face to face with two of God's fixed dates:

One is very near, and to wait for it will not take long (i.e. Death). Thus, if Man's arrogance and denial is based on truth and strength, let him then guard and avert himself against this death, if it is possible for him to do so. Let him gather all the people of the world to save him from such a fate if they too believe they are capable of doing so.

This is another challenge which the unbelievers and the mislead will not be able to escape or redeem themselves from when the appointed time and the instant of death arrives. This

has been decreed upon Man, by God's infinite knowledge.

At that very time the throats of the unbelievers, the mislead and the arrogant ones will run dry and their eyesight shall gaze in shock when failure in its absolute form shall become evident over their faces, and where no maneuver, measure or scope will prevail or help!

"Then why do you not (intervene) when (the soul of a dying person) reaches the throat? And you are, at that moment, looking on? But We (i.e. our angels who take the soul) are nearer to him than you, but you see not. Then why do you not, if you are exempt from reckoning and recompense (punishment, etc), bring back the soul (to its body), if you are truthful?"[39]

"Nay, when (the soul) reaches to the collar bone (i.e. up to the throat in its exit), it will be said: "Who can cure him and save him from death?"[40]

"And the stupor of death will come in truth: "This is what you have been avoiding!" And the Trumpet will be blown,- that will be the Day whereof warning (had been given) (i.e. the day of Resurrection). And every person will come forth along with an (angel) to drive (him), and an (angel) to bear witness. (It will be said to sinners): "Indeed you were heedless of this, now We have removed your covering, and sharp is your sight this day!"[41]

At that very moment in time, Man wishes for his instant of death to be adjourned so that he may return back to life, even if it was only for an hour.

39- Al-Waqi'aa 56: 83-87
40- Al-Qiyama 75: 26-30
41- Qaf 50: 19-22

"Until, when death comes to one of them (those who join partners with Allah), he says: "My Lord! Send me back, so that I may do good in that which I have left behind!" No! It is but a word that he speaks, and behind them is a barrier until the Day when they will be resurrected."[42]

As for the second appointment, it is when the fate of mankind shall come to be settled following resurrection and judgment. When the successful ones will be blessed with their proximity to Allah. Those who succeeded in the battle of life against infidelity and hypocrisy, those who believed in God's promise to them, those who obeyed their Lord, fulfilled their mission, did not betray or abandon their position or retract, and neither forsaken nor became exhausted.

As for the unbelievers, the arrogant and the oppressors, they shall ask when the veil has already been removed and what is in the heart has been made revealed and the covert becomes overt. They will ask for another opportunity to change their state of affairs, and reconcile their conditions in an attempt to resume a life that is filled with earnestness in lieu of humor, faith instead of denial, disbelief and obedience in place of conceit and haughtiness. However, time has long gone. Falsehood had perished, the deception that they had established is now destroyed, servants are gone, friends, companions and kinsfolk have surrendered... the ill-omened fate has been determined after they have squandered due to their foolishness and repudiation, the opportunity of life. At that very moment it will be said to them:

"Were not my Verses recited to you, and then you used to deny them? They will say: "Our Lord! Our wretchedness

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42- Al-Muminoon 23: 99-100

overcame us, and we were erring people. Our Lord! Bring us out of this; if ever we return (to evil), then indeed we shall be wrong doers and oppressors. He (Allah) will say: "Remain you in it with ignominy! And speak you not to Me! Verily! There was a party of My servants, who used to say: "Our Lord! We believe, so forgive us, and have mercy on us, for You are the Best of all who show mercy! But you took them for a laughingstock, so much so that they made you forget My remembrance while you used to laugh at them! Verily! I have rewarded them this day for their patience, they are indeed the ones that are successful."[43]

43- Al-Mu'minoon 23: 105-111

Dimensions of Man's Duty on Earth

The Qur'anic discourse about man's essence, the environment that surrounds him, that of nature's components or that of the order of the universe is not told. For example, like the account related by those who are experts in the field of agriculture, the environment or nature.

It is in fact an account, which utilizes these things as a means for another objective, that emphasizes Man's duty on earth. This begins initially by knowing Allah. Then goes through the process of how to assume control and take possession of that nature. And finally concludes in how to guard the values of truth and forthrightness in this life.

For this reason the Qur'anic verses placed great emphasis on Man's essence, attempted to illustrate the secrets and miracles they contain and then focused on nature, the universe and the order of existence.

These were the horizons that the Qur'an had asked us to explore and examine so that we could, through them, reach the Almighty and ultimately recognize the Shaper and the Creator. Thus, the Qur'an had employed such realities as the surrounding environment and the vast and wide universe as a testimony of truth within the souls of mankind. It allowed our minds to be the arbitrator of such realities and demanded that they form an earnest position after the truth had been determined. This was so Man could come to know who created and founded him from nothing, bestowed upon him His grace and compassion, and made things very clear before his very own eyes.

"We will show them Our Signs in the universe, and in their own selves, until it becomes manifest to them that this (Qur'an) is the truth. Is it not sufficient in regard to your Lord that he is a witness over all things?"[44]

"Be cursed the (disbelieving) man! How ungrateful he is! From what thing did He create him? From Nutfah (male and female semen drops) He created him, and then set him in due proportion; then He makes the Path easy for him; then He causes him to die, and puts him in his grave; nay, but (man) has not done what He commanded of him."[45]

"So let man see from what he is created! He is created from a fluid poured forth, proceeding from between the back-bone and the ribs, Verily (Allah) is able to bring him back (to life)."[46]

"Did We not create you from a fluid of no value? Then We placed it in a place of safety (womb), for a known period (determined by gestation)? So We did measure, and We are the best to measure (the things)."[47]

"Then let man look at his food, That We pour forth water in abundance, and We split the earth in clefts, and We cause therein the grain to grow, and grapes and clover plants (i.e. green fodder for the cattle) and olives and date-palms, and green gardens, dense with many trees, and fruits and Abba (herbage etc), (to be) a provision and benefit for you and your cattle."[48]

44- Fussi'lat 41: 53-54
45- Abbasa 80: 17-23
46- At-Ta'riq 86: 5-8
47- Al-Mur'salat 77: 20-23
48- Abbasa 80: 24-32

"And on the earth are signs for those who have faith with certainty, and also in your own selves. Will you not then see?"[49]

"Allah is He Who raised the heavens without any pillars that you can see. Then, He rose over the Throne (in a manner that suits His Majesty). He has subjected the sun and the moon (to continue to go round)! Each running (its own course) for a term appointed. He regulates all affairs, and explains the Ayat (proofs, evidence, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) in detail, that you may believe with certainty in the meeting with your Lord. And it is He Who spread out the earth, and placed therein firm mountains and rivers and of every kind of fruits He made two in pairs (may mean two kinds or it may mean: of two sorts, e.g. black and white, sweet and sour, small and big, etc.) He brings the night as a cover over the day. Verily in these are signs for people who reflect. And if you (O, Muhammad (p.b.u.h. & h.f.) wonder (at these polytheists who deny your message of Islamic Monotheism and have taken besides Allah others for worship who can neither harm nor benefit), then wondrous is their saying: "When we are dust, shall we indeed then be (raised) in a new creation?" They are those who disbelieve in their Lord! They are those who will have iron chains tying their hands to their necks. They will be dwellers of the Fire to abide therein."[50]

49- Adh-Dhariyat 50: 20-21
50- Ar-Raad 13: 2-5

Gateways into the Invisible World

All the previous Qur'anic texts inclusive of their phenomena of the universe and aspects of originality are but gateways that the mind can use to cast a look at the transcendental world through reflection and contemplation. So that the mind can come back with fresh provisions that supplies it with supplements and directions that nourishes the tree of belief.

In doing so, Man would then offer more in the domain of righteous work, and his share in the balance of performing good deeds will increase to reach the highest levels.

"See they not how Allah originates creation, then will repeat it? Verily, that is easy for Allah. Say: "Travel in the land and see how (Allah) originated creation, and then Allah will bring forth (resurrect) the creation of the Hereafter (i.e. resurrection after death).
Verily, Allah is able to do all things. He punishes whom He wills, and shows mercy to whom He will, and to Him you will be returned."51

Every supplement a believing mind acquires, is but a new addition to the energy of belief that purifies the soul of a believer further and increases his conviction. He learns that whatever is made available before him in living provisions, components, necessities and recreations, are verily bestowed upon him from God the Gracious. Where the Almighty is acknowledged by it all the time, remembered by it as the Benefactor of all favors, and that He is the Lord of all existence, be it on Earth or in Heaven.

51- Al-Aan'kabout 29: 19-21

"Tell Me! The seed that you sow in the ground – is it you that makes it grow, or are We the Grower? Were it Our Will, We could crumble it to dry pieces, and you would be regretful (or left in wonderment). (Saying): "We are in deed Mughramoon (i.e. ruined as a result or lost the money without any profit, or punished by loss of all that we spend for cultivation, etc.) Nay, we are deprived! Tell me the water that you drink. Is it you who causes it to come down from the rain clouds, or are We the Causer of it to come down? If We willed, We verily could make it salt (undrinkable), why then do you not give thanks (to Allah)? Tell Me! The fire which you kindle. Is it you who made the tree thereof to grow, or are We the Grower? We have made it a reminder (for the Hell-Fire, in the Hereafter); and an article of use for the travelers (and all the others in this world). Then glorify with praises the Name of your Lord, the Most Great."[52]

Through such ample educational and intellectual wealth, the personality of a Muslim is built and his conviction is established. He shall come to know who he is, where he came from, what his target and mission is and where he shall be going. A sense of satisfaction is generated within his feelings and he becomes conscious of his actions. The tranquility of belief then reflects on his inner soul to allow him to grasp the most significant realities through his creed within a limited span of time. Such creed will then guard him against the glitter of temptations; keep him aloof from intellectual delusion, behavioral declination and suffering from a split personality. An energetic believer is *guarded against horror by his devotion. The timid, frightened one will drown though he may be inside a vessel. The unbeliever is always confused, and the horizon is his*

52- Al-Waqi'ah 56: 62-74

place of loss. While the believer himself is a universe, where the cosmos in him has not been lost.

This is the Islamic perspective of Man's mission and duty on earth. However, he is not just a rational being. Rather, he occupies the highest level of existence, be it in rank, status or mission. Since he is God's vicegerent on earth, he is also His dominant divine fore-ordainment and decree that cannot be opposed if true servitude to God is conditionally realized within him.

"And I (Allah) created not the jinns and men except they should worship Me (Alone). I seek not any provision from them (i.e. provisions for themselves or My creatures), nor do I ask that they should feed Me (i.e. feed themselves or My creatures). Verily, Allah is the All-Provider, Owner of Power, the Most Strong."[53]

However, the distorted notion of what the word "worship" really means, had changed the definition of raising supreme the word of God in every situation, to feel his presence in every moment and to invoke His divine providence and care in every action. The concept of worship has been transformed into mere prayer rituals that are performed, and into words that are simply being uttered repeatedly. This is being done while neglecting the social, economical, political, educational and scientific dimensions of the concept of worship. This has thus lead us down a path of decadence, while our enemy progressed. This has caused us to fall deep into the sewer of backwardness, allowing others to advance and make us live on the periphery

53- Adh-Dhariyat 51: 56-58

of life. Allowing others to take control. It is impossible in light of the above, that Man would be able to accomplish his mission on earth if he is ignorant, primitive or completely dependent on others for survival.

Understanding Life is a Religious Duty

For this very reason, industry, agriculture and procurement of expertise becomes crucial. This will help the Islamic setup produce food from its own land, manufacture arms in its own factories, and treat itself with medicine that is manufactured in its own plants and laboratories. This is essential if the Islamic setup is to achieve self-sufficiency and independence by its own will and resolution, so that it may remove itself from a position where it must succumb to any pressure if and when international loans are to be put on hold, or when it is threatened by an embargo being imposed on aides. And unfortunately, this is what is occurring in the present day circumstances.

Within the scope of religion and understanding it becomes a very important religious duty, which is equivalent to prayer, fasting and pilgrimage, to invest in industry, agriculture, financial management and other investment potentials. Therefore, any negligence or disregard for these things will be deemed; according to law, a grave form of treason.

It is also considered, by the same law, that anyone who deprives society from developing and progressing, and helps its enemies in discrediting its religion and honor, as practically deserting God's religion. To accomplish God's vicegerency on earth, therefore, requires a dense and copious knowledge that transcends the boundaries of simply comprehending the rules of prayer, fasting and pilgrimage, in order to reach the wider picture and that is the jurisprudence of creations. This jurisprudence takes great concern in understanding the universal laws,

reasons for defeat and destruction, explores history in the past and reads well into the future, takes control of its resources with the most advanced scientific methods and utilizes existing potentials with the best possible methods.

This cannot be fully realized except through the establishment of diligent scientific institutions and foundations that are concerned with strategic studies. Institutions where qualified people and experts are in abundance and exclusively devote their time to achieving the above. For a one-eyed vision is no longer able on its own to accompany and absorb all the up-to-date things that emerge in our daily life.

Similarly, the process of decision making in itself requires a variety of information that may not be available to one individual no matter how intelligent this person may be.

Such a vision has been adopted by all the developed nations of the world and such Institutions have become the prime source for decision-making in these countries.

However, our nation remains the only one that is dominated by corrupt and autocrat rulers, who are only concerned in achieving their own interests. As for their citizens, they consider them nothing but mere herds of sheep who have been inherited from their forefathers and who shall be passed down to their heirs as part of their will. The ruler imposes whatever he wishes, even if it was contrary to the wishes of the mass public, against their interests and against both their present and future.

In order for our nation to overcome this tragic predicament, and in order for our position to be more than just reactionary, these institutions must exist so that the jurisprudence of life is realized side by side with the jurisprudence of divine precept.

Such jurisprudence can only be established through these institutions – of which the importance for their existence was emphasized earlier – in order to consolidate the process of awareness in regard to contemporary events. To examine and probe into the future in light of the developments that are taking place on a daily basis so that our nation can live its present time, while by the same token not forsake its well-established religious and ideological teachings, and never disregard its values. In this way only, the repugnant dualism statement that reads: "Either the mind or tradition, either science or religion" that was widely spread and mush publicized by secularist, can be terminated and refuted. Indeed, Islam does not recognize nor even acknowledge the existence of such dualism, for the primary condition of assuming vicegerency from Allah after conviction is none other but knowledge.

Naturally therefore, this knowledge cannot be accomplished simply on the basis of one branch or one specialization. It rather requires the integration of mind and heart, the integration of secular and spiritual knowledge, theory and applied knowledge, or human and experimental sciences, just as values are integrated within the Islamic system. That system which represents God's final and absolute religion over all messages.

A Distinctive Civilized Performance

Such synchronization, which was pointed out earlier, requires various areas of specialization within the domain of a universally accepted human sciences. There is also a need for experimental and applied sciences such as medicine, engineering, chemistry, pharmacology and natural sciences, astrology, cosmology, computer science and various other sciences which civilizations, countries, and notable societies cannot be established without.

These sciences collectively represent the most basic conditions and prerequisites in order to assume the post of vicegerency from God, and without it, a Muslim will never under any circumstances be able to safeguard his faith, honor or dignity. Similarly, he will never be able to establish justice, accomplish equality among people, nor protect human dignity.

In light of these reasons, it is inevitable for a Muslim who is " God's vicegerent on earth" to be distinct in his faith. However, such distinction will not occur unless he implements the instructions and directions of that creed in his daily routine and conduct. Therefore, it is incumbent that his faith holds absolute priority in his mind, conscious, and practices. It must occupy all the loyalty and devotion in his feelings and emotions.

He must also be unique in the manner he behaves out in public. This behavior must be characterized by integrity, intelligence, maintaining good relations with others, honesty, outstanding work performance, continuous creativity and to constantly assume things of excellent nature whenever possible. So much so that when others look at him they will find in him the image of a strong Muslim who is well qualified in his area of specialization, who keeps his word and promise, who is intelligent in his thoughts and education. One who is well-balanced and harmonious in

all his affairs, making him a being who complements life and does not impair it, preserve life and not destroy it.

Only then, will he be able to fulfill his mission and only then will others listen to him. For he will become, as a result of that distinction, a role model, a source of power and a source of knowledge and morals. These are the prerequisites that make a strong believer fit for the post of vicegerency. For the world does not pay any attention to the weak and certainly does not respond to the emaciated ones. They are those who live on the periphery of this life, who take and benefit from others but never produce anything themselves, who get irritated but never activated, who get affected but never effective... they only receive but never give.

The Third Domain

Cognizance of the Universe is a Tribute of Faith

He who trails the Qur'anic text will find that it has made a strong connection between true conviction and knowledge of the universe in all its dimensions and mysteries together with what it contains in terms of potentials. Due to this, the Qur'an had told Man, the vicegerent, about the heavens, the earth, the oceans, the rivers, the trees and various types of plantations and fruits. The mountains, soft grounds, the valleys and other things calls on him to probe and recognize the components of this existence, be it in heaven or on earth.

This is his kingdom. Thus, he must learn about its boundaries, characteristics and what is in it and who is in it, and this can only be primarily accomplished through knowledge.

It is common knowledge that reading is the basic tool for learning. It is the most effective method in obtaining knowledge and the basic means to examine information. The revelation from the outset, i.e. the Qur'an, began with it, for Islam is a religion where its miracle is but a book, and the first word that was revealed in it was "*READ*".

This prelude is an indication that the most important qualification for the post of vicegerency is learning and knowledge, and at the forefront of what a person must know and learn is to know God. To get to know Him through the signs of divine creativity that are found in this existence; beginning with Man himself and the miracles that exist within him, right

through to the environment that surrounds him. This includes what is in it and what it contains in terms of life's constituents, motion and growth, and what effect and interactions they have over one another, and subsequently, over Man himself...

In fact, illiteracy, ignorance and narrow-mindedness cannot give birth or up-bring a sound belief. Similarly, such an environment cannot be a true reflection of the principles and values of Islam.

Similarly, the opposite is also true, for the person who is devoid of something cannot therefore offer it to others. Thus, a person who is illiterate about the affairs of this religion can never guard it or protect it.

The Moral Framework of Knowledge

Since reading and learning are the basic starting points in shaping this great being, the first words of the gracious revelation were full of veneration of the value of knowledge. It was full of words of praise for its pursuers and seekers, provided it is not rendered purely for the satisfaction of one's own desires, or exploited to cause oppression, coercion and the annihilation of life. Nor was it designed for delusion to take the better of those endowed with it. And not abused or misused in the course of achieving superiority, monopoly and imposing the will of the dominant over the helpless, the powerful over the weak, and the rich over the poor. Such assurances cannot primarily be realized unless Man himself is committed to the moral standards, or to the framework of the Qur'anic values that his faith teaches him.

The poet of the Nile river, Hafez Ibrahim[54] was drawn to this reality when he said the following verses in his poem:

Knowledge on its own is not sufficient, no doubt
Unless the learned one, with morals is crowned
As for people, this has his fortune with wealth and that with knowledge

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54- Hafiz Ibrahim (1871-1932). He was called the poet of the Nile. He was born in the city of Dairoot in Upper Egypt. He was raised as an orphan after his father died when he was four years old. He joined the military school in Egypt, and was later appointed as an army officer in Sudan. He took part in the rebel movement against the English and was put in provisional retirement and thus returned back to Cairo. He participated in expressing the feelings and views of the masses during the political events with his political and social poetry. His Divan (collection of poems written by one author) was published into three small volumes during his lifetime and was later published after his demise and included all his poems that did not appear in the first publication. He has a book of prose, called Layali Satih. It was written in a particular Arabic rhythmic prose style. (Refer to the Concise Arabic Encyclopedia, V.1, p. 685).

While another with excellent manners is endowed

If you have been blessed with a praiseworthy character

Verily, The distributor of sustenance (i.e. God) has graced you beyond doubt.

If this Qur'anic framework of morals is achieved in dealing with all of life's various arenas, Man – who is God's vicegerent – will transform into a true servant of God at work, be it in the factory, office, field, on the mainland, at sea, in space, on mountain summits, in mines or on the rocky surfaces of valleys.

All his actions, words and practices will rejoice and glorify God's name in heaven and earth, and will transform into praises of His name that fill the horizon. This will, as a result, assemble to Man the constituents of existence and to his reverberation shall respond everything in heaven and earth.

The vicegerent shall, as a consequence of this ardent work, ascend to a world where he will earn the honor of being in the company of the Almighty and the gracious angels, when they shall testify to Allah's unity and absolute justice.

"Allah bears witness that none has the right to be worshiped but He, and the angels, and those endowed with knowledge (also give witness); (He is always) maintaining His creation in Justice. There is no God but He, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise." [55]

Those having knowledge, who have been referred to in this verse, are not necessarily the scholars of Islamic Shariah only, or those endowed with the knowledge of the religion. In fact, they are those who are endowed with knowledge from every

55- Aal-'Imran 3: 18

field of expertise and specialization. Provided their intentions are pure and their inclinations are oriented towards God, when approaching science in their quest to understand it, analyze it or contrive anything from it, they first and foremost do it in the name of Allah. Secondly, to raise high His Name, thirdly as a service to his creations, and fourthly to develop this earth and enhance life.
All of the above is thus carried out in response to Allah's command in establishing this vicegerency, in inhabiting the earth and in developing a tidy life for nations and societies, and to facilitate its means before individuals and groups.

When science (i.e. knowledge) and scientists interlock with this intention, strive towards it and take the effort in obtaining it, this will then be considered as a form of a holy struggle that enables man, the vicegerent, to live respectably, chastely, and with his head raised high in this world. He will also be counted among the devout warriors, whose aspiration is deemed a form of glorification, their steps a form of worship and their motionlessness a form of prayer and supplication.

This is in fact what the noble Prophet (p.b.u.h & h.f) was trying to draw our attention to when he said: *"He who seeks out a path in quest of knowledge, Allah shall facilitate for him a path that will lead him to Paradise"*[56]

"The precedence of a scholar over a worshiper, is in similitude to my (i.e. the Prophet) precedence over the most humble among you".

56- Sahih Al-Jami Al-Sagheer and its additions. Volume 5, P.302

"Almighty Allah, his angels and the inhabitants of heaven and earth, even the ant in its den and the fish, pray for the person who teaches people what is good"[57]

There is no doubt that the more knowledge Man acquires, the more his cognizance of Allah increases. With this cognizance his fear and consciousness of Him grows, his love, admiration and ties with the Almighty will also increase, as will his cognition of the aspects of Allah's glory and perfection. For He is the possessor of Glory, Beauty, Loftiness and Perfection.

The Qur'an herein, draws our attention towards the people endowed with knowledge in regard to the question of belief. This is in contrast to those who are irresolute and skeptical – whose judgments are marred with doubts and suspicions, and are not based on facts.

"And (it is) a Qur'an which We have divided (into parts), in order that you might recite it to men at intervals. And We have revealed it by stages (over a period of 23 years). Say (O Muhammad {p.b.u.h & h.f.} to them): "Believe in it (the Qur'an) or do not believe (in it). Verily! Those who were given knowledge before it (the Jews and the Christians), when it is recited to them, they fall down on their faces in humble prostration. And they say: "Glory be to our Lord! Truly, the Promise of our Lord must be fulfilled." And they fall down on their faces weeping and it adds to their humility."[58]

"And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say: "We believe in it; the whole of it are from our Lord. And none receive admonition except men of understanding"[59]

57- The previous reference. Volume 44, P.86
58- Al-Israa 17: 106-109
59- Aal-'Imran 3: 7

"And that those who have been given knowledge may know that it (this Qur'an) is the truth from your Lord, and that they may believe therein, and their hearts may submit to it with humility. And verily, Allah is the Guide of those who believe, to the Straight Path."[60]

"And indeed now We have conveyed the Word (this Qur'an in which is the news of everything to them), in order that they may remember (or receive admonition). Those to whom We gave the Scripture (i.e. the Torah and the Gospel, etc.) before it, they believe in it (the Qur'an). And when it is recited to them, they say: "We believe in it. Verily, it is the truth from our Lord. Indeed even before it we have been among those who submit themselves to Allah in Islam as Muslims (like Abdullah bin Salam and Salman Al-Farsi, etc.)"[61]

In light of these Qur'anic texts, the venerable forefathers understood the important link between belief and knowledge. Thus, they set-off in this world to raise supreme the word of Allah in every location, extol the banner of monotheism and guidance everywhere, and utilize life's social, economical and political capabilities – through knowledge, planning, organization and assiduous work – for the service of their religion and mission.

In their definition of what constitutes pure worship, they never made a segregation between what is worldly and what is religious. Nor between a mosque or a factory, nor a niche of worship or a plant. For they all – with sincerity of intention and elevated purpose – pour forth into one stream, i.e. to establish Allah's vicegerency on earth. Through developing this earth,

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60- Al-Hajj 22: 54
61- Al-Qasas 28: 51-53

controlling it, unraveling its mysteries, extracting its resources and taking reign of it in Allah's name.

For this reason Abdullah bin Mas'oud said: *"Learning constitutes prayer."*

And Abu Dar'daa said: *"To study for an hour is better than observing night vigil, and whoever believes that to go and come in the course of seeking knowledge is not forming a part of struggle, then he has a defect in his mind and opinion."*

While Ibn Abbass said: *"Learning knowledge for part of the night is better and more beloved to me than observing it all in night vigil."*

Sufyan Al-Thaw'ri also said that: *"There is nothing better, after fulfilling the obligatory acts of worship, than seeking knowledge... it was said to him: even though they had not intended to do so, he replied: by them going out to seek knowledge, constitutes in itself an intention."*

And Sufyan Bin U'yaynah said: *"Whoever seeks out knowledge, has in fact given his pledge to Allah."*

It was only with such sound educational and scientific approach, that Islamic values prevailed. Thus, as a result of these values, societies changed, civilizations were erected and various countries came under conquest. People were liberated and emancipated from the slavery of pre-Islamic paganism and from being enslaved to ignorance, weakness and back wardness. The Muslim was thus to them a representation of a minaret of knowledge, a source of education and guidance, and an example to be followed and emulated.

This is what Mohammad Iqbal the philosopher and the poet has alluded to when he said:

This age is but a jet black night

O *Muslim, light up the night for the perplexed* ones

The vessel of truth amidst the depth of confusion

Can only be noticed by the vessel's Skipper

You are indeed a treasure of rubies and pearls

Among the Surge of this world, even though they may not recognize you

The assemblies of generations are in dire need for your strong voice

Even though they may not hear you!

The Climate of a Renaissance

The resurgence of the Islamic society in our contemporary time must begin on the basis of the above. This can be achieved by setting up the right mental, psychological and social climate which embraces – within its folds – the science and scientist of every field of specialization, and does not ignore any intellectual effort or scientist.

This cannot be accomplished except by setting up a plan for a program that can achieve positive dimensions, and includes a working plan which can be applied to all government and relevant institutions pertaining to academics and academies.

We can also quickly lay down for it the following broad headlines and draw up general characteristics that can be represented by the following:

1. To sponsor scientists and enable them to carry out research and study. To provide them with an adequate environment so that they can be free to excel in their field of expertise instead of involving them in political or partisan debates that consume all efforts and energy, and exhausts their intellectual talents of creativity and achievement.
2. To sponsor gifted students from various stages, observe and note their activities, develop their talents and guide them in their field of study, in order to invest such potentials in a way that conforms with their talents and hobbies.

3. To invest in time and space in order to develop this earth, serve the environment and take part in developing it and fulfill its needs, particularly in terms of agriculture, crafts and trades.

4. To invest in the component of raw materials through structural planning and to employ the youth potentials in accomplishing the desired goal.

5. To utilize wealth and convert it to a means of production rather than leaving it in frozen assets. To encourage people who are interested in setting up farming lands, plants and factories that meet the needs of the society. Liberate its will and drives it forward towards independence and self sufficiency; primarily to protect one's own-self and secondly to set his willpower free from any pressure placed on him by loan repayments and financial aid.

6. To emphasize the identity features, guard society's public appearance, strengthen the prevailing cultural links and roots of civilization with the nation's message and great objective. This can be achieved by linking the foundation of originality with modernization, and heritage with contemporaneity.

7. To emphasize the protection of the religion's authentic set of beliefs and the well established Islamic rules. This is because they represent the formal version that the Nation has sanctioned as a system and a point of reference for its progress and conduct and had recorded it in its constitution. Thus, it should not be permissible in the name of freedom of thought or expression, for any intellectual or cultural impingement to violate or breach these well established rules, be it through defamation, slander or vilification.

8. To have continuous communication and compatible discourse with the cultures and civilizations of others in an attempt to learn the aspects of good and bad, the points of strength and weaknesses, the positive and the negative areas of others. In order to discover the most appropriate means when dealing with them and to realize the benefits of what they have accomplished in terms of progress and development, after careful scrutiny, examination, inspection and investigation.

For not everything they have should be deemed harmful, destructive or part of the abomination of Satan's handiwork, because our religion teaches us that *"Wisdom is a believer's goal of persistent search, when and wherever he finds it, he is more deserving of it over any one else..."*

How splendid the Qur'anic texts are when they emphasize the features and characteristics of the believers who enjoy sound intellect. They described them as those who never isolate themselves or confine their minds to a prison of ideas. Nor are they confined by an education that is limited in vision, limited in awareness and subsequently limited in presence and influence. That is, if it was to originally have any influence whatsoever.

It opened their eyes, intellectual vision and hearing to the truth wherever it is, and that they must in their quest to reach it, hear, comprehend, contemplate, think and then choose the best of what is said in order to follow it and apply it.

"...So announce the good news for My servants – those who listen to the Word and only follow the best thereof. Those are

(the ones) whom Allah has guided and those are men of understanding."[62]

Therefore, to know the other person, learn his culture, study the technique of his social and economical values and other factors that influence his personality, to learn about the motives which provoke action within his volition, and to come to understand the general values which govern his behavior, comes under the heading of what we call the jurisprudence of ethics, which we have been commanded to learn and be fully versed in.
For it helps us indeed when dealing with others, prepares us in the best possible form and provides us with the most fundamental tools that enable us to understand his personality and mentality.

We will not be able to successfully deal with him, except with this comprehensive kind of knowledge, be it in times of peace or war, in propagation or communicative work, or in the various fields of economical co-operation. Therefore, we can not accept the doctrine that calls for total isolation from others, for two reasons:

Firstly: It is not practically possible, particularly with the availability and progress of communication (i.e. satellites, the internet, and other tools). Such tools have penetrated all borders and boundaries, invaded every household, infiltrated the souls and minds, and changed this vast world into a small town. Thus any idea can be made public, news made within reach and information can be disseminated within few minutes.

Secondly: Such doctrine will deprive us of the opportunity to attain an insight and an awareness of what is taking place

62- Az-Zumar 39: 17-18

around us: events and interactions which naturally influence us, either positively or negatively, whether we like it or not.

The solution is to immune and safeguard ourselves and our future generations; to strengthen our cultural and educational immune systems within our communities. While right at the forefront of what we must do is to give the Mosque back its due role in being an influential and effective tool. Likewise, religious establishments must resume their proper function and true mission rather than just endorsing the interests of the rulers. Or simply become a dull spectator which has no life or role to play except to forward greeting telegrams, support the ruler during special occasions or sight the moon every year, and that is the end of the matter.

Rather, there is a dire need to enter the realm of shaping the public opinion, and to compete with others in presenting serious cultural and recreational activities. Activities that develop the minds and sentiments without harming the tenets of faith or its morals.

9. To have full understanding and awareness of the role the media play in shaping the minds, hearts and the Nation's public sentiments. The media must therefore work hand in hand with the educational curriculums in protecting the faith, purifying and sanctifying the souls and in teaching positive values that are able to make the society grow, develop and equally curtail the evil inclinations within man.
10. o have a conscious understanding of the role modern technology has in developing and shaping a society, and in providing man with means of comfort and ease with a great emphasis on clarifying the real meaning of recreation.

This understanding is vital if the harmful consequences that occur, as a result of foolishness and abominable extravagance, are to be avoided. If they do occur, they will eventually lead to the deprivation and elimination of boons and blessings, due to misuse and abuse in trying to quench greed and respond to desires. The Qur'an gave this an "ingratitude" expression, as it was stated by Allah when He said:

"Have you not seen those who have changed the blessings of Allah into disbelief (and caused their people to dwell in the house of destruction. Hell in which they will burn – and what an evil place to settle in!) And they set up rivals to Allah, to mislead (men) from His Path! Say: "Enjoy (your brief life)! But certainly, your destination is the (Hell) Fire!" [63]

We have seen the effect of technology on Western societies when they give up on moral precepts in regards to what is deemed lawful and unlawful. The outcome was that modern technology provided man with good living, comfort, shortened long distances and abridged time for him. By the same token it also amassed in arms warehouses of the east and west – an average of 8 tones of explosives for each individual. It had also failed to offer him true happiness, inner peace, or calm to his nerves.

This technology equally failed, despite its entire great achievements to bestow upon man a sense of peace and security, and was unable to quench the thirst within his spirit and sentiments. For all of these things can not be fully realized and accomplished except by the guidance conveyed through

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63- Ibrahim 14: 28-30

Allah's revealed ***Shariah*** **(law)**, which is presented to people as a system that provides their sought-after life of peace and stability.

If this revealed Shariah is intermixed with modern technological and technical achievements, it will then positively establish a prosperous and blişsful society that ensures strength and superiority for its people. This is the reason why the poet said:

Never, ever would a nation attain loftiness

If it aspires dominion through utter ignorance

Religion and Life, if they come together at once

They will cry out to the towns, give out your blessings with abundance

This in turn makes it absolutely imperative upon a Muslim, Allah's vicegerent on earth, to execute a number of points in response to the call of duty assigned to him, of which the most important ones are:

- Not to be absent from the seen;
- To go down to the field;
- To offer the Islamic alternative to life's problems; and
- That he should not be detached or divorced from his identity and loyalty in accepting challenges on the basis of moving along with time. Otherwise his personality will face dissolution and self-loss.

Therefore, he will only be able to accomplish this if he arms himself with sound standards derived from the infallible divine revelation in terms of what constitutes right and wrong, lawful and unlawful. These standards ensure the correct attitude in what he ought to accept or reject. It also provides

his culture and intellect an immunity with which he will have the means to digest the culture of others without fearing it or getting fully assimilated in it.

The Heritage That is on the Verge of Being Lost

Let us come back again to reiterate that: the venerable forefathers, after having fully grasped the culture of their time, were able to succeed in steering the movement of struggle to their advantage, and to head in the proper direction with great skills and immense capabilities. They responded well to the prevailing challenges, forced themselves and their wills on life and were finally able to change the reality of their world with proper Islamic principles.

While on the other hand, we have witnessed that our contemporary generations have failed to come up with the same outcome. This is due to various factors, including the misconstrued concepts that deterred them from their true belief, and caused them to practice various types of distorted religiousness that clouded their minds and confiscated their will. As a result, today's Muslims remain absent from their reality, leaving others to shape it for them.

Such deteriorating reality reminds us of what the poet asserted when he said:

We have inherited glory from forefathers that were best

We, however caused mischief in their places of rest

If fine honor was inherited by the daughters of contempt

Soon it will verily be easily washed away and eventually swept.

In view of the above, Muslims lost the precondition set by Allah to become his vicegerent, and thereupon lost their

credibility to lead this life, change the way societies move, and manage crises and conflicts that dominate and fill the air that surrounds them.

There is no cure, except by re-shaping Man afresh through the Islamic system. This system is capable of grasping the cycle of life and that of societies with all its dimensions (i.e. social, economical, political, scientific and literal).

It is also the only unique system that can single handedly build the mind, discipline the self and purify the sentiments, feelings and emotions in a way which creates self-balance within Man. Yet no particular aspects of the above would ever overcome the other.

Equally, it is the only system which is endowed with the ability to guide and steer personal, mental, material and spiritual capabilities to bring happiness to mankind. It can accomplish refine morals and elevate Man above animals, who are primarily concerned with satisfying their base desires. Thus without it, Man's only role becomes confined to matter and absent from the spiritual realm. This will cause him to reach a stage where he is only concerned with tangible things and gives no regard or consideration to the transcendental world.

That is why Man no longer knows in this world:

Who he is...
Where he came from...
Why he came here...
Or what the end is going to be....

However, the Islamic system in fact responds to Man's inquisitive mind by offering him convincing answers to these

questions beyond doubt, while utilizing his own inner-self, and then the environment that surrounds him, as evidence in substantiating these answers.

Then puts before mankind, the following statement:

"We will show them Our Signs in the universe, and in their own selves, until it becomes manifest to them that this (the Qur'an) is the truth. Does it not suffice in regard to your Lord that He is a Witness over all things?"[64]

"And on the earth are signs for those who have faith with certitude. Likewise in your own selves. Will you not then see?"[65]

64- Fussilat 41: 53
65- Adh-Dhariyat 51: 20-21

Destiny...Where to?

After Man knows who he is, where he came from and what his duty in this world of existence is, there remains the fourth and final question...

Where to...?

Will this life come to an end? Will the fun be undone? Will the dead simply remain in oblivion underground, thus being the end of the matter?

Or will the cycle of life and death go on uninterrupted, where wombs will give birth and the earth will swallow indefinitely?!

Will those – who have been buried underground, millions of years ago – have their existence come to an end by absolute annihilation? Or have they just begun a new cycle of life in another world among the realm of the living ones?

Which may we be familiar with or otherwise?

Such questions have been adopted by ancient and contemporary materialistic philosophies; they have been broached by the minds and attempts were made to offer answers to them in various ways. However, they have all failed to corroborate their argument and were incompetent in giving satisfying answers to Man in regard to his future and destiny. As a result, this has caused some people to reject the very idea of even giving it a thought, and thus they attempted to run away from it. To them, it became sufficient to be content with the spur of the moment that they were living in – to never engage their minds or intellects in this enigma and the debate that revolves around it.

Omar Khayyam, the famous poet, adopted this position during one stage of his life, when he said:

Do not cause the soul to grieve by fear of despair

And seize from your present the spoils of certitude, fair and square

For under the sand, the one departing yesterday is equal to he that left thousands of years before for sure!

In this point of view, everyone shall die. Thus, Man should live the for the moment he is in and should never think of what shall come after.

The fact of the matter is that such a viewpoint is characterized by extreme shortsightedness because it confines Man to a very limited scope, and makes him miss the opportunity of having a better future. Assuming he believed in a future, part of this viewpoint's effect and impending breakdowns would cause him to live without any disciplines, rules or control.

Imagine a life of that sort – how can it be righteously established? And who else beside the strong can have the right to exist within its bounds?

It will indeed be a jungle. Where people – despite the belief in resurrection and punishment after death by some individuals – mistreat one another in a way that even beasts dare not do in a jungle! Imagine then, how they would behave if such beliefs were also kept away from them?
What shape or form would Justice be in?

There are also those, who in the past, have adhered to the doctrine of atheism. They believed in it and rejected other dogmas. It was a doctrine that was founded on the belief of

worshiping life, and on the idea that time keeps on revolving, wombs keep giving birth to human beings, that the earth keeps on gulping down the dead, and that there is no Lord or Creator.

Therefore the idea of denying resurrection is not a new philosophy. It was in fact the chitchat on the lips of children even during Primitive Ages.

This philosophy's concept and ideology, even though its adherents were known anciently as atheists, still to this very day, dominates the minds of many in our contemporary civilizations, even in the twentieth century. They even at times, use knowledge as a garb with which to cover their mental and intellectual flaws.

It is a philosophy that lacks certitude in the most crucial issues that Man requires certainty in, in order to have a well-balanced and harmonious life.

It equally lacks scientific proof in substantiating its claim. For even if it believed in its own existence, it is dispossessed of any knowledge of how this existence came about! Or when and how this existence will come to an end. Thus the riddle of life after all this will remain unresolved.

This is why the Qur'an targeted this philosophy and replied to its adherents, who said:
"And they say : "There is nothing but our life of this world, we die and we live and nothing destroys us except time." And they have no knowledge of it, they only conjecture."[66]

66- Al-Jathi'yaa 45: 24

These very people have now, and in the past, formed their opinion in regards to the most important matters, on conjecture and doubt. They confront facts with fiction and false argument. They, amidst the many proofs found within themselves and in the universe, amidst the process of life and death that takes place every minute, day and night, argue their case with means that lack objectiveness.

They demand that you go beyond the laws that govern existence; that you revive the dead for them so that they may see their forefathers (who have passed away) come back to life, walk this earth and move about before their very eyes!

"And when Our Clear Verses are recited to them, their argument is no other than that they say: Bring back our (dead) fathers, if you are truthful! Say (to them): Allah gives you life, then causes you to die, then He will assemble you on the Day of Resurrection about which there is no doubt. But most of mankind know not."[67]

67- Al-Jathi'yaa 45: 25-26

The Deniers and the Ultimate Challenge

The Qur'an, in confirming the reality of resurrection after death, used the beginning of life represented in the first form of creation as proof of the resurrection of the creations in the hereafter. It linked the beginning to the end with the question of creation, and between the beginning and the end it also introduced the notion of skeptics.

It placed them before a reality that they can neither escape from nor avoid. It is the reality of death that comes with or without a cause; no being, no matter who he is, can guard himself against it or have the ability to turn it away.

It is one of Allah's predestined decrees, which shall not leave anyone behind, nor shall anyone find immunity from it. The story of life is then reduced to a few words that restore Man back to his true size, and arbitrates the soul to its own-self during the last moments of departure from this life. When he is surrounded from all sides by powerlessness, it invades him from every possible way, and he then finds no makeshift or means to repel away this divine foreordainment when the fixed time comes up...

*"**We created you, then why do you believe not?**"*

The Qur'an inevitably puts forth its overflowing evidence in regard to the authenticity of the beginning and its origin.

The proof lies in the very verses that deal with the question of the beginning and end:
*"**Then tell Me (about) the human semen that you emit. Is it**

you who create it (i.e. make this semen into a perfect human being), or are We the Creator? We have decreed death to you all, and We are not unable to transfigure you and create you in (forms) that you know not."[68]

This is death – can anyone repel it from another person or even drive it back from his own-self?

Such a challenge is therefore suffice to prepare man to be ready to meet his Lord after the truth has been made clear to him and the guideposts of reality have been made manifest before his very own eyes.

Regrettably though, Man is only presumptuous, contentious and quarrelsome! Often, you will find that among the people of our contemporary civilizations, those who only live for the day they are in and never think of what is going to happen after this life. He may even raise doubt and cause skepticism. This is why we find the Qur'an has in fact presented, in the same course of discussion, the stages of life from beginning to end:
"***O mankind! If you are in doubt about the Resurrection, then verily! We have created you from dust, then from Nutfa (mixed drops of male and female sexual discharges), then from a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood), then from a little lump of flesh, some formed and some unformed (miscarriage), that We may make (it) clear to you (i.e. to show you our Power and Ability to do what We will, in regard to the question of*** **creating, originating, changing and transforming**"[69]

68- Al-Waqi'aa 56: 57-61
69- Al-Hajj 22: 5

"And We cause whom We will to remain in the wombs for an appointed term, then We bring you out as infants, then (give you growth) that you may reach your age of full strength. And among you there is he who dies (young), and among you there is he who is brought back to the miserable old age, so that he knows nothing after having known. And you see the earth barren, but when We send down water (rain) on it, it is stirred (to life). It swells and puts forth every lovely kind (of growth)."[70]

70- Al-Hajj 22: 5

The World Beyond, has Unveiled the Peculiarities and the Imprints

This is the image of life in Man and plants. Where both of them are common in terms of their origin... for the earth is the foundation, where Allah's power creates from it that well-proportioned Man who is pertinacious and arrogant.

These are the stages of his life in this world, beginning from dust, then progressing through to the various stages of formation: when he initially was a mere semen in the back of his father;

and later an embryo in his mother's womb;

then a little weak infant encountering life for the first time;

then a strong, mature, rational being filling the world with clamor and action, while at times with corruption and obstinacy;

then an old man! Where he reaches the worst stages of his life and becomes incapable of meeting his own needs. His back becomes curved, his hair turns grey, his hearing and sight weakens, his movements slow down, his memory becomes exhausted, and the present interlocks with the past.
Things start to get mixed up, and then the appointed time of death finally comes to conceal such weakness and hides such incapability. Where Man then enters a new phase of existence and into another world, which unveils the peculiarities and the features.

All these stages, in terms of creation and formation, should have been sound proof that remains in the heart and mind of

every individual. But since man was prone to forgetfulness, with the surrounding habitation causing him to lose (in many instances) the feeling of the divine blessings, the Qur'an gave him an example and produced before his very own eyes a tangible pattern that he observes everyday...

This example is none other than that uncultivated, still land – how do these plants grow out from it? How do all these different sorts of colors, tastes and smells get allotted to them and who distributes them? How do they contain and possess most of the starch, glucose and protein constituents? and in which factory were they made?

It is indeed the Hand of the Omnipotence that creates life, raises the dead, causes the living to die and resurrects them yet again:
"And you will see the earth barren, but when We send down water (rain) on it, it is stirred (to life), it swells and puts forth every lovely kind (of growth). That is because Allah is the truth, and it is He who gives life to the dead and it is He who is able to do all things. And surely, the Hour is coming, there is no doubt about it, and certainly, Allah will resurrect those who are in the graves."[71]

Amid such a situation of multiple facades in creation and origination, the mind stands in astonishment ahead of this divine power, contemplating what it wants to accomplish in this existing world. It is indeed a creative power without any bounds, and nothing can ever render it weak in what it wants to do, and nothing can stand in its way.

71- Al-Hajj 22: 5-7

That is why the Qur'an also talks about the same stages of existence from the initial moment of the beginning right through to the last moment.

However, it concludes its discourse by stirring the understanding in the lethargic, stagnant mind and provokes it towards full comprehension. The mind will endeavor to reach the inevitable outcome by surrendering and submitting to the Omnipotent, and having total belief in all that He says. For the creator of the creation, right in the beginning, is the only one Who will bring them back and resurrect them again for judgment and punishment.

"He, it is Who has created you from dust, then from Nutfah (mixed semen drops of male and female discharges), then from a clot (a piece of coagulated blood), then brings you forth as children, then (makes you grow) to reach the age of full strength, and after wards to be old (men and women), though some among you die before, and that you reach an appointed term, in order that you may understand"[72]

72- Ghaffer 40: 67

Intellectual Insanity and the Suicidal Mind

Denying resurrection following all the proofs, seems to be one of the various types of insanity and madness; a kind of intellectual suicide, and an adoption of defective reasoning in denial and evasion.

As well as a transgression against truth, it is an attack on its very essence, a negligence of the mind and the squandering of the very value of knowledge. For this reason the Qur'an has concluded the verse by the following plea:
"In order that you may understand"

The Qur'an then goes back to reiterate that it is the Divine power alone Who enjoys the ability to create and be creative. The Divine power alone can carry out all these stages, and the only One Who is endowed with this ability is none other than the Self-Subsisting. He Who raised the heaven and spread the earth; Who Oversees what each and every soul has earned. And that the process of creating, originating, dying and reviving will not take place save only under His command and Will.

"He it is Who gives life and causes death. And when He decides upon a thing He says to it only: Be! and it is."[73]

The Qur'an draws man's attention amidst the manifestations of the Divine power in giving life and causing death to a soul, the surrounding universe, and the entire world of existence. This is an attempt to deter him from being lead astray or from

73- Ghaffer40: 68

losing the right perspective and forfeiting the truth. Because to assume a position of denial would not be beneficial, nor would his argumentative opposition achieve, in the end, any sound proof to rely on, or any facts to depend upon. In fact, he will only arrive at a mirage. Where his supporters will find themselves in a position of shame and disgrace for their denial of the inevitable occurrence of resurrection, after all the substantial evidence which has been produced before them. The Qur'an also presents to us one of the futuristic situations, where the position of the deniers and the unbelievers is made very evident. Lets take a look together at this situation:

"See you not those who dispute about the Ayat (proofs, evidence, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of Allah? How they are turning away (from the truth, i.e. Islamic Monotheism to the falsehood of polytheism)? Those who deny the Book (this Qur'an), and that with which We sent Our Messengers (i.e. to worship none but Allah Alone sincerely, and they reject all false deities and to confess resurrection after death for recompense) they will come to know (when they will be cast into the Fire of Hell). When iron collars will be rounded over their necks, and they shall be dragged along by chains. In the boiling fluid, then they will be burned in the fire. Then it will be said to them: Where are (all) those whom you used to join in worship as partners Beside Allah, they will say: They have vanished from us"[74]

74- Ghafer 40: 69-74

When Tongues Turn Mute and Falsehood is Annihilated

At that point in time, falsehood will perish away, long exhaustive arguments will be annihilated and certain tongues – who had often transgressed and exceeded all bounds either by mockery and slander at times, by denial and disbelieve at other times, or by showing contempt towards the believers on numerous occasions – will be muted.

This is how humiliation will overcome their faces. How statures elevated by arrogance, fed by deception, and augmented by respite will be shattered. This is how foreheads will bow down. Such foreheads that often thought that the key to destiny was in the grip of their hands, and that the reins of power were at the beck and call of their orders. Thus, they will decree and the whole world will obey and comply with their commands.

This is how, at that position, everything will be lost, every iota of pride will be eradicated, and the bodies of these people will be stripped of their clothing only to be substituted by garments made from pitch. While fire will overcome their faces....

Their thoughts will also be exposed and what is in their breasts will come out in the open.

"The Day when all the secrets will be examined (as to their truth). They will (man) have no power, nor any helper."[75]

There will be no more room to tell lies, no means of deception, and verily no place for the old good, happy and

75 At-Tariq 86: 9-10

merry times to take place again. And it will be then said unto them:

"That was because you had been exulting in the earth without any right (by worshipping others instead of Allah and by committing crimes), and that you used to rejoice extremely (in your error). Enter the gates of Hell to abide therein, and (indeed) what an evil abode of the arrogant!"[76]

This is a situation that the Qur'anic texts visualize in haste about the inevitable future that will come, it gives glad tidings and warns:

It gives good news to those who believed in resurrection, of being rewarded for their good deeds, attaining Jannah (paradise) and be saved from *Naar* (Hell Fire).

It warns the unbelievers and the deniers about the bad condition and the evil future and fate that awaits them. Meanwhile, it also clearly expresses to all mankind a number of important facts, that are as follows:

1. That the day they are living in is followed by another day that is more lasting and eternal.
2. That the life they are leading now is followed by another life that is everlasting and more significant.
3. That the world they have come into and are living through, is followed by a hereafter, where they will all come before their Lord to be judged for what they have committed and for what their hands have earned.
4. That their future following this life is in fact determined by them, with their own choice and free will, and that

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76 Ghafir 40: 75-76

they should prepare themselves for it and choose their destiny as of now.

5. That the death which will ultimately face them is not the end of all ends, but rather a temporary slumber or in fact a dividing station between two phases of existence.

The first one, was to plant the good deeds, while the other, is to harvest the good ripe fruits.

The situation will never be, as some may think, one of an eternal death with no hereafter. Rather, there will be stations where a person will be judged and held accountable for his actions – where he shall be asked about everything that he has carried out, be it minor or major.

Only if when we were to die, we would be left alone

Death will then indeed be the comfort of every living soul
But we shall be raised up yet again

Where we shall be asked about everything one by one alone

No doubt then, that reality should compel us to think about the future and how we can prepare ourselves for it. However, in pondering about the future, it does not mean that Man should only plan for his present time and only be concerned with his old age. Where, as some do, quickly hasten to take up a life insurance policy so as to find rest through it and never become dependent on others. This is not the real future. The real future is what comes after this life. For what comes after is the true manifestation of the everlasting and eternal future which is not threatened by old age, disturbed by sickness or overcome by extinction. It is only shortsightedness and narrow

mindedness that confines the future to a world that will inevitably perish.

His eminence, the very learned Muhammad Al-Ghazali said: "Most people of today, only relate to the future through that narrow perspective, and when someone says: 'I am thinking about my future,' he is in fact only making reference to his days of tomorrow and his future old age... however, pondering into the hereafter and preparing for it, is far from people's minds despite the many warnings and the demise of tens and hundreds of people every hour.[77]

"Draws near for mankind their reckoning, while they turn away in heedlessness. Comes not unto them an admonition from their Lord as a recent revelation but they listen to it while they play, with their hearts occupied (with evil things)."[78]

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77 The five pivots of the Holy Qur'an. The learned Imam, Sheikh Muhammad Al-Ghazali, P.152. First edition 1409/1989 Al-Sahwah Publishing House.
78 Al-Anbiyaa 21: 1-3

Antagonism until Judgment Day

To think that death is a total annihilation is a delusive feeling. Regrettably however, the majority of people do not prepare themselves appropriately to meet Almighty Allah.

They may even overload the world with corruption and opposition, cram paper articles and journals with utter lies, falsehood, slander and untruth about Allah and his Prophet and defame many facts and realities about the religion.

Those endowed with belief and conviction, on the other hand, may oppose such people and then the debate will become very intense among the two groups, just like what is taking place right now.

However, the outcome will be decided over there and not here, when the debate will resume again in front of Almighty Allah, the Lord of everyone. Both groups shall bring forward their litigation before Him at a decisive place, where truth shall prevail and falsehood shall be rendered invalid and null. Where one group will become blessed while the other will be doomed.

This is the very point that the Qur'an highlights, when the debate between the Prophet and those deniers and unbelievers used to grow fierce. The Qur'an would be revealed to remind the Prophet (p.b.u.h & h.f) that this debate against him shall be resumed on the day of judgment. The day when their sharp tongues will be reduced to shame, and their arrogance shall face punishment and torment. This is why Allah tells his Apostle: "***Verily, you (O Muhammad) will die and verily they will die. Then on the Day Of Resurrection, you will be disputing***

before your Lord."[79]

The Qur'an puts this before them in order that:
"He may make manifest to them the truth of that wherein they differ, and that those who disbelieved (in Resurrection, and in the Oneness of Allah) may know that they were liars."[80]

The dimension of place and time shall then elapse, and the Qur'an presents the fate of the disputing parties in the Hereafter:
"These two opponents (believers and disbelievers) dispute with each other about their Lord; then as for those who disbelieve, garments of fire will be cut out for them, boiling fluid will be poured down over their heads. With it will melt or vanish away what is within their bellies, as well as (their) skin. And for them are hooked rods of iron (to punish them). Every time they seek to get away therefrom, from anguish, they will be driven back therein, and (it will be) said to them: "Taste the torment of burning!""[81]

This is the fate of the group of deniers and unbelievers. As for the believers in Allah and the Hereafter, the Qur'an also presents their fate and the reward and blessings that has been prepared for them. It says:
"Truly, Allah will admit those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah, Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, to Gardens underneath which rivers flow (in Paradise), wherein they will be adorned with bracelets of gold and pearls and their garments therein will be of silk. And they are guided (in this world) to the goodly speech, and they are

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79 Az-Zumar 39: 30-31
80 An-Nahal 16: 39
81 Al-Hajj 22: 19-22

guided to the Path of Him (i.e. Allah's religion of Islamic Monotheism), Who is Worthy of all praises."[82]

This is why the Holy Qur'anic texts have been revealed, in order to show man:

Who he is...
Where he came from...
His duty and mission...
And where his destiny lies....

The types of address in the Qur'an about resurrection after death, the Hereafter and Allah's divine justice, its strict account, its eternal bless and perpetual torment, were numerous and varied. Yet, the only logical and worthy course of action is to have belief in Allah and the Hereafter.

Denial of resurrection after death is primarily in contradiction with the simplest maxims of logic. It is also in sharp contrast and contradicts the concept of individual accountability, the justice of penalty and being brought to strict account. As well as representing a major loss – according to the materialistic people themselves – in as far as the transaction of life and death is concerned, both the future and the past will be lost.

The Fortune Teller and the Doctor alleged both,

That Bodies shall not be assembled; I said behold, to them both

I shall not be a looser, If it is true what you said both

But If what I say was the truth, then you will be at loss, both

82 Al-Hajj 22: 23-24

The Qur'an refuted such false claims, and it called upon Man to arbitrate his mind in this serious matter...

To calculate it really well...

Not to go to extreme lengths of denial and disbelieve...
To tame oneself on accepting the facts without stubbornness...

To yield to truth through a free mind...

To make his decision, following careful consideration and deliberation...

Not to put his future at stake by denying resurrection, rejecting the concept of reward and punishment, and the presence of Paradise and Hellfire...

And to be aware that he shall meet Allah at an appointed time, where the Almighty will count his deeds and inform him of what he has done.

Allah said:
"The disbelievers claim that they will never be resurrected (for the Account) Say (O Muhammad): Yes! By my Lord, you will certainly be resurrected, then you will be informed of (and recompensed for) what you did, and that is easy for Allah. Therefore, believe in Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad), and in the light (this Qur'an) which We have sent down. And Allah is All-Aware of what you do."[83]

Therefore, the sensible and sound course of action, the rightly guided and rational position that is built on facts and is based on scientific proofs and conviction, is to believe in Allah and the Day of Resurrection. To bear witness that Allah is the

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83 At-Taghabun 64: 6-8

truth, Paradise is true, and that Hellfire is true. Hence, we were directed to this notion by the Prophet himself through words that were replenished with true certitude and conviction, when he used to observe night vigil, where he used to pray:

O Allah to you alone belong all praise, You are the maintainer of the Heavens and the Earth and what exists therein.

To You belong all praise, and to You belong complete sovereignty of the Heavens and the Earth and what exists therein.

To you belong all praise, You are the Truth, Your promise is the truth, meeting You is truth, what You say is the truth, Paradise is true, Hellfire is true, the prophets were true, Muhammad (p.b.u.h & h.p) is true, and the Hour of Reckoning is true.

O Allah to you I have submitted myself, in You I have believed, in You I put my trust, to You I repent, in Your name I dispute with others, and to you I turn in arbitration. O Allah forgive me for my sins, those I have committed and those I am yet to commit, those that I have done overtly and those I have done covertly.

You are the Expeditor, the Delayer, there is no God but You, and there is no might or power save with You, O Allah.[84]

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84 This hadith was narrated by Bukhari in the Chapter of "Observing Night Vigil", Fat'h Al-Bari, V.3, P.3, according to the verification of Muhammad Foaud Abdul Baqi and Abdul Aziz ben Baz. Printed by Dar Al-Fikr Publishing House.

Epilogue

My dear reader,

I hope that after having put forward before you this presentation, the overall picture would have been made profoundly manifest, the truth made clear, the myths exposed and dispelled, and that the veil has been removed.

We have indeed, my dear reader, two appointments with you:

One of them is here, in this existence. Where we dialogue therein, and if we either agree or disagree, then there is no problem.

While the other one, is when we meet yet again in the eternal world, where the tongues will be muted, pretense will vanish and only the truth, that does not accept any further dispute or argument, will prevail. It is then that logic will be determined, without any dispute among any two groups, in the following two points:

One shall cry loud with the tongues of the liars. When they will declare their regret and sorrow after having, due to their heedlessness, vein desires and conceit, destroyed the vessel of safety. Where they dissipated, due to their mockery and contempt, their life's opportunity in entering the Eternal Abode of Bliss and to stand through it at the doorsteps of a future that neither comes to an end nor has any misery.

While the second point, shall cheer loud through the tongues of the truthful people. The ones who responded to the call of their Lord. Those who complied with the call of the mind and nature without any arrogance or stubbornness. Those Who endured during their stay on earth the toils of life when they lived their life in accordance with Islamic disciplinary values that had defined to them what is lawful, what is prohibited, what is permitted and what is restricted. Amidst an environment that was trenched with all means of temptations. Those Who faced the heavy current that was pushing them forward to traverse and deviate from the true path. It was enticing them, through its temptation with all that it holds in terms of embellishments and delights, when it forced itself upon them explicitly and openly. Yet, they kept themselves, their morals and their instincts sublime and aloof, and were able to live amidst the flames without getting burnt.

They will be the ones whom the angels shall gladly receive and entertain by saying:

This is the day that you have believed in and had to endure for it the toils of the past world. This is the day you have been promised, peace be upon you for what you have persevered in patience! Excellent indeed is the final abode.

They will cheer aloud deep from within, with overflowing happiness after having been met with the gratification of God's grace and the glad tidings from the Almighty Allah, saying:

All praises and thanks is to Allah Who has fulfilled His Promise to us and has made us inherit (this) land. We can dwell *in Paradise where we will... All the praises and thanks is to Allah, Who has removed from us (all) grief. Verily, our lord is indeed Oft-Forgiving, Most* Ready to appreciate (good deeds and to recompense).

I really wish, my dear reader, to meet you over there among that group of people!

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